

ROBERT TYLER

# Robert Tyler

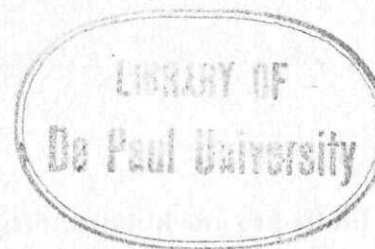
Southern Rights Champion

1847-1866

A Documentary Study  
Chiefly of Antebellum Politics

by

PHILIP GERALD AUCHAMPAUGH



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PHILIP GERALD AUCHAMPAUGH

TO MY CHILDREN  
VIRGINIA AND LEE

Edition limited to one hundred fifty copies  
of which this is No.....

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The cooperation of Doctor Lyon G. Tyler, brother of Robert Tyler, has been invaluable in the organization of this work. I have been fortunate in securing a foreword to this study by his pen. I also desire to express my gratitude to the Archives Division of the Library of Congress, and to Mr. Ernest Spofford, Librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, who, by their kind attention to my needs have made the completion of this work possible. In addition I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Bunford Samuel of Philadelphia, an eminent authority on Secession; Mr. Harry Lydenburg, Assistant Director of the New York Public Library; Mr. Morgan P. Robinson, Librarian of the State Library, at Richmond, Virginia; and Professor Theodore C. Blegen, Superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society. Through the kindness of Professors William E. Dodd and Avery O. Craven, I secured research privileges at the University of Chicago in the summers of 1931 and 1932. Like courtesies were extended me at the University of Michigan in the summer of 1929 due to the courtesy of Professor Ulrich B. Phillips. Professor James G. Randall of the University of Illinois kindly read part of the manuscript. None of these gentlemen are in any way to blame for any comments or unorthodox opinions of the writer.

Since Robert Tyler's writing is at times difficult to decipher, I anticipate certain difficulties for the reader where words had to be omitted. In the main,

however, the thread of the events is clear, and, I trust, interesting to persons who like to explore the woodlands of American political life.

PHILIP GERALD AUCHAMPAUGH

STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE,

DULUTH, MINNESOTA.

December 21, 1934

## A Foreword

I have taken great pleasure in reading over Mr. Auchampaugh's Manuscript on Pennsylvania Politics in the time of Robert Tyler. It recommends itself to me for two reasons especially. The first is that Robert Tyler was a half-brother, who, as I was always informed by those who knew him,—especially by my mother—was a man of excellent ability and character. I never knew him personally because of a great difference in age and distance of residence between us. This work of Mr. Auchampaugh shows that I was not deceived in the favorable estimate that I was led to conceive of him.

In respect to his political principles and the stern honesty of his character he very much resembled his father, the ex-President, but there was a marked difference in the tone of their expression in letters and speeches. The one was modelled largely upon the broad kindliness of the Fathers of the Republic, especially upon James Madison and James Monroe, with whom his own father, Governor John Tyler, Sr., was thrown in intimate connection. The other, brought up in the heat of the slavery conflict, shared naturally at times in the impassioned severity of that unfortunate issue. Men cannot live like salamanders in devouring flame without occasionally spitting fire, which the politicians North and South all did with rare exceptions. Some of the letters of Robert Tyler appear rather unnecessarily severe in the light of these quiet days.



And here comes in the second reason for taking interest. The work is important for the penetrating rays which it throws into national and local politics. The side-lights in which Mr. Buchanan is presented are interesting for displaying the wisdom exerted by him in dealing with the public questions. He was an ardent lover of the Union, and knowing that the Union itself in its inception was a matter of compromise, he thought to save it by compromise. The issue was the extension of slavery, and Buchanan saw, as any man now can see, that granting the Missouri Compromise would not give the South a single new state, while it would placate the Southerners and prevent war. It is the strangest thing in the world that a man who opposed the Compromise and precipitated the war, should nevertheless get the credit of "preserving the Union".

An interesting feature of this work is the connection presented between Virginia and Pennsylvania and its final disruption. This connection was of long standing, and for this reason Pennsylvania was called the Keystone State. It will be remembered that the New England States in the beginning were strongly aristocratic. The statesmen from that quarter hated democracy, and Hamilton, their great leader, pronounced the people "a beast". It was the appeal of Jefferson to democracy that induced the Middle States to break loose from their connection with the New England States and ally themselves with the Southern, resulting in the rule of the Virginia Presidents. While New York and New Jersey fell off at times from this

union, Pennsylvania was seldom faithless. It lasted through the nomination of James Buchanan and collapsed at last with the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.

This work shows that Robert Tyler in Pennsylvania and Henry A. Wise in Virginia were the mediums of this connection in these ultimate days and that perhaps no one contributed more to the final rupture than the brilliant and erratic John W. Forney, "a now forgotten politician", as Mr. Auchampaugh calls him. The friendship of Buchanan for this man illustrates his strong trustfulness in people who assumed to be his friends. With rarer insight, Robert Tyler in several letters predicted the faithlessness of Forney, but nothing till the directest sort of evidence could induce Buchanan to class him among the bitterest of his enemies. This strong attachment is shown in his connection with Robert Tyler. Buchanan, Northern man as he was, and sympathizing with the North in the great war following Lincoln's attack on South Carolina, never lost faith in the sincerity of Robert Tyler, who was always what he assumed to be—a sincere friend of Buchanan and supporter of his administration.

To my mind, Mr. Auchampaugh has accomplished a very valuable work.

LYON G. TYLER,

Holdcroft  
Charles City County, Virginia  
December 4, 1934

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## Chapter I

### ROBERT TYLER, PHILADELPHIA DEMOCRAT

The leading characters of this study which covers the period from 1845 to the outbreak of the War between the States are Robert Tyler, son of President John Tyler, Henry A. Wise, Governor of Virginia, and James Buchanan. The prominence of these men in the political arena of the time makes their letters abound in valuable sidelights on the political currents in their respective states and also at Washington.

Robert Tyler became a Pennsylvania Democrat prominent with the Irish Democracy of eastern Pennsylvania and one of the moving forces in the Buchanan organization of the Keystone for fifteen years. Little trace of his activities is found in Pennsylvania books because he was forced to flee for his life in the spring of 1861 and returned to Virginia in its fight for freedom. The kindness of Lyon G. Tyler led me to interest myself in the career of this forgotten journalist and public man, and the results have well repaid the interest.

Robert Tyler, who will often speak for himself in the following pages, was an excellent example of a Virginia gentleman. He was born in 1816 and first came to Philadelphia to practice law in the thirties. A graduate of William and Mary, of tall stature and

striking but not unpleasant features, it is not surprising that he met and married Priscilla, daughter of Thomas Apthorpe Cooper, the eminent tragedian. Mr. Cooper had a fine home at Bristol not far from the metropolis and in the fifties the family spent much of their time there. When Tyler became President, Robert acted as his private secretary. Mrs. Robert Tyler, whose beauty still smiles at us from the steel engraving in Ellet's "Court Circles of the Republic" was for a time mistress of the White House for her illustrious father-in-law.

At the end of the Tyler administration, Robert returned to Philadelphia to resume his legal practice. In 1847 he was appointed Solicitor to the Sheriff of Philadelphia. In 1850 he was made Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, a post he occupied until his exile in 1861. Tyler was not "money-minded." He sought political life and honors rather than offices or riches. Hence his activities as a journalist, orator, and party lieutenant are far more important than the positions he held. The peak of his political success came in Pennsylvania in 1859 when he held the important post of Chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee. Later he held the same post in Alabama after the war.

Robert Tyler is the poet in politics. A poet in politics before the Civil War should surprise no one. We are treated to political ideas in the works of Wordsworth. Shelly, Byron, and Gilmore Sims had pronounced political interests as did other poets of the

romantic thirties, while conservative statesmen like Webster and Daniel S. Dickinson not only quoted poetry but had poetic moments of their own. Hence it was not unnatural to find a son of Tyler himself a literary gentleman, being compared to Shelly by his admirers who delighted in his "high-wrought and vivid imagery" in his "Ahasuerus" or "Death or Medora's Dream." Small wonder that such a man became president of the Irish Repeal Association at the age of 28 and later a leader among the Irish Democrats of Pennsylvania and New York. Tyler's devotion to Buchanan was just another indication of this loyalty and idealism. Devoted to his adopted state, he was a true son of old Virginia and bent all his political energies toward cementing the Pennsylvania-Virginia Democracy.

The figure of President Tyler is too well known in American history to need much introduction. Ever an ardent devotee of the States Rights School, his presidency had been marked by many statesmanlike measures, and had been characterized by an undeviating devotion to his constitutional ideals. After his retirement his marked ability as an orator made him much in demand as a lecturer on political and historical subjects. Although no longer seeking public office his political influence in his state was by no means departed. Age did not lessen his loyalty to his constitutional principles, but it had brought a calmness and sagacity which was not always present in some of the younger leaders. His views on public questions

frequently set forth in the following pages will be shown to be marked by a dispassionate sanity and broadminded appreciation of conditions.

Another son of President Tyler who appears in these pages is John Tyler, Jr. He was active in Washington politics when his father was President. Later he seems to have had a position in the Attorney General's office under Pierce. His devotion to Governor Wise almost amounted to a religion. His temperament was most ardent and his enmities pronounced.

Governor Henry A. Wise of Virginia whose political hopes and aspirations form much of the warp and woof of this study was no ordinary character. He began his political career in 1832 when he was elected a delegate to the National Democratic Convention at Baltimore. His father had been Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates before 1800, and various members of the family had attained political and military distinctions. Although Wise, like the elder Tyler, refused to acquiesce in Jackson's tyrannical course toward South Carolina during the Nullification controversy, he also opposed nullification as a constitutional remedy. In his congressional career Wise ardently championed the rights of the slave holders, and returned the assaults of the fanatical abolitionists with the ardor of a "fire eater."

His temperament made him an ideal orator of the more florid and denunciatory type. But the same nature hindered him in the more patient game of

a political organizer. His extreme individualistic nature made him prone to go off on a political tangent at some critical moment to the consternation of his friends. The Tylers appreciated his good qualities and had no end of patience with his limitations. Of a brilliant mind and acute sympathies he was always interesting.

In contrast to the character of Wise was Robert M. T. Hunter, United States Senator from Virginia. By the 50's, he, like Buchanan, had seen many years of political service at Washington. In his younger days he had been Speaker of the House, and in the Senate he was regarded as a disciple of Calhoun. Despite his alleged descent from Pocahontas, the Virginian was not of a belligerent turn of mind. His calm analytical mind was more at home in the Finance Committee than in the acrimonious debates of the Senate. Hunter did not lack courage to state his principles, but he had a common sense too often absent in some of the colleagues from his section. He was a well read man and a very acceptable speaker. By his appearance and temperament he more resembled an Old Line Whig or a Democrat of the Madisonian type than those men with whom he was politically allied and who were known in the North as the "fire eaters."

Buchanan had had experience in nearly every field of public activity by 1855. He had been in both Houses of Congress, he had been appointed to a diplomatic post in Russia, and was during the Pierce regime Minister to England. As Secretary of State

in the Polk cabinet he had had a prominent part in the Oregon and Mexican questions. He had long been an open and avowed friend of Southern rights and had rendered the elder Tyler service in defending his vetoes against the attacks of Henry Clay. Save for a few years of vacation at the close of Polk's term he had been in public service since the days of Monroe. From the time of Jackson he had placed himself at the head of a following in Pennsylvania and by 1852 was the leader of the most powerful faction of the Keystone Democracy. No less than three times before 1856 was he considered for the Presidency, and Senator King of Alabama had been named Vice-President in 1852 to placate Buchanan's disappointed friends. A temperament not given to passions coupled with a very sagacious and patient nature had made him more than skillful at political intrigues, and kept him out of those pitfalls which are wont to abound in the paths of politicians. His ambitions were more than those of a mere office holder. He aspired to a great and worthy name in the annals of his country. Beneath a seemingly cold exterior was a kind heart as those who formed his fireside circle knew well.<sup>2</sup>

When Buchanan decided to leave the Senate for the Cabinet of Polk in 1845, Robert Tyler did not think the move well advised.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, as a sole letter of that year indicates, he was busily stoking the home fires while his chief was in Washington.

The strenuous fight for delegates to the State Convention which would nominate delegates to the

National Convention of 1848 was clearly mirrored in Tyler's letter to his chief. Interesting is his description of Clay, the man whom his father successfully defied over the rechartering of a United States Bank.<sup>4</sup>

No. 10 South Seventh Phila,

*Private*

November 18, 1847

My dear Sir/

I ought to have replied to your very kind and friendly letter received a week ago; but having anticipated the pleasure of seeing you in Washington some time during the latter part of the month I preferred to express to you in person my very sincere obligations for the manner in which you have conveyed to me assurances of your friendship & personal regard. And I may here say in answer to your kind expressions, that, if I were ever to consent to receive & take office, rest assured I should feel as much honored to receive a Commission from your hands—the leading Representative in Talents & Service from my adopted State—as from those of any other Statesman in America.

You have doubtless seen Mr. Clay's Resolutions & speech. They have provoked a very strong disapprobatory popular feeling here; and ought to be universally condemned as extremely prejudicial & pernicious. But Mr. Clay has great experience as a Politician—He has never been much more—and understands well the temper & character of our People and he has taken his position with great distinctness—with determined boldness—and after long and deliberate

weighing all the chances & consequences of the issue he has raised. He now plays his game, looking to a broad theater of action, with a determination to lose or to win, with *certainty*. The morale of his position, as a mere question of party—political manoeuvre—is somewhat analogous to that occupied & successfully maintained by Mr. Calhoun on the Oregon question—a negative, relatively, but a negative pregnant with a *latent* force, which he depends on circumstances to develop. He no doubt hopes, if he can maintain himself against the first rush made upon him that circumstances & elements in the future will afterwards enable him, slowly but certainly, to re-consolidate the full strength of his Party, and even to increase it by additions from certain quarters. He takes his stand with the confident expectation that the Administration will fail to establish a peace with Mexico before the meeting of Congress. It is perfectly certain that if his speech & Resolutions reach Queretaro before the Mexican Congress consent to a Treaty (if there be now any thought of making one) no Treaty can be made upon the Administration basis. The Mexicans will naturally hold out—at least as a matter of *form*—until the next presidential election be decided—with the hope & view, that in a change of Administration, the Nation may escape the heavier penalties of the War. His calculation then is, under such a contingency—that the popular Imagination which is now very much influenced by the fact of the triumphant progress of our arms in Mexico—our splendid victories—the idea of

extending our Republican empire to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, & of diverting the course of the vast Asiatic Commerce from the road of the Cape of Good Hope, to the ports of the Californias & across this Continent; &c. will gradually subside from its present excited state, into a condition of tranquility or supineness, under causes which will almost necessarily concur to obstruct & paralyse that continued series of marvellous exploits & wonderful Progress, which have so far attended our operations, & which have created & preserved the national enthusiasm in connection with Mexican affairs. He is of the opinion doubtless, that a Peace on the terms of the Administration will be made to appear to the people an impractical thing, that Congress by its distractions will fail to sustain the Administration and the war with warmth & energy—that in consequence of this our arms will languish; and the Country will gradually rally on the ground he holds as presenting a *clear & definite object*, perfectly feasible in itself. He thinks the Northern States will begin to talk about the cost of the War, taxation & debt—that the Southern States will see in his plan a certain escape from the Wilmot Proviso, & the danger of being bordered by free territory under the jurisdiction of the Union—that the Western Section will begin to think about the probable depreciation of their property in land by an encouragement of emigration farther west, & the introduction of immense bodies of other lands into the Union—and that the general popular mind will finally become fatigued at

being occupied with one subject for so long a time, with an unascertained result still before it.

I hope—however, that the Administration will not pause an instant, in the vigorous prosecution of hostilities, until Congress shall take the responsibility of arresting its onward & determined course. To beat Mr. Clay, it is, in my humble opinion, only necessary to avoid, either apparently or really, standing still, of its own motion & accord.

The nomination of Govr. Shunk for the Presidency is a mere ruse to avoid any Committal in the issues between your friends & those of Mr. Dallas for the State nomination. I am satisfied the Govr's aspirations lie in the *U. States Senate* for the present, & he & his friends are Consolidating their strength on an outside issue to be used for this purpose. It is certainly my impression that the State Administration is not in its personelle, friendly to you,—at least not particularly so—but I also believe there is no reasonable cause to doubt that you will carry the Convention by a very decided vote, against all opposition—

Believe me to be very truly

Your friend & obedient Servant

Hon: James Buchanan.

Ro: Tyler

Seward of New York is to be the vice president with Clay—I know a way to strike Gov: Seward a very heavy blow

Tyler was constantly active in Buchanan's behalf. In early December he predicted that all the oppo-

sition would combine to oust Buchanan. Cass men were "excessively" active." It would be a "verbal and passionate fight" but Buchanan, he thought, would win. Clay's friends had had a large meeting and he was going to be "vastly troublesome." The Democrats must have a war meeting and a Pope Pius IX<sup>e</sup> meeting but no Buchanan meeting until after the delegates were elected. Nevertheless a meeting by Buchanan men was held to sustain the Administration and the war. It was "perfect pandemonium."

For the first time in the Tyler letters comes sharp criticism of John Forney. This distrust on the part of Tyler and no doubt shared by others was a harbinger of momentous events in the history of the Keystone Democracy. Forney was a native of Lancaster who had become a Buchanan lieutenant, a federal office holder, and, at this time, was editor of Buchanan's chief organ, the *Pennsylvanian*. Tyler wrote:

"Mr. Forney knows but little here of men or things, and it is my opinion that he is in hands indiscreet, and whose professions are infinitely beyond the capacity to perform." "Judicious management would be needed if the City and "perhaps the County" could be carried." He had invited Forney to talk with him but wrote, "I presume he is too busy to take council with me." Evidently the editor had snubbed him—a most fatal way to treat a high-toned Virginia gentleman. It was also evident that Buchanan was willing to do what he could to obtain a federal appointment for Tyler. But the latter did not think it



proper to speak about his own "immediate affairs" "for it seems none of you, the Cabinet advisers of the President, appear to have any influence with him." Hence the matter could slide.

The next week things had taken a new turn and Tyler was in a whirl of enthusiasm. In a "private note" he wrote:

No. 10 South Seventh Phila  
December 18th

Private

My dear friend/

I have just returned from the greatest meeting of the Democracy ever held in Phila., without any exception—admitted by universal concurrence to be so. Your name was received with a *whirlwind of applause* by thousands. The resolutions are first rate. Your name, *as the favourite of Pa. is most beautifully introduced*. I told you I would do it. All do you credit. We shall (I hope) carry the City—the Dallas men almost despair I think. Holland will carry his ward (it is my impression) against great odds.

The line up in my opinion stands—17 wards in the City—six for Buchanan—six for Dallas & 5 doubtful, in four of which you have the best chance.

Barton made an excellent speech. Forney will write you no doubt. Hurrah for Buchanan!

Truly yours

Hon James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

Tyler himself had made a speech at the meeting which had according to Buchanan extended his reputation" Polk wanted it in the Union, but unfortunately only the letters had been published. Both men studied the policy of Ritchie's Richmond Empire and concluding, it was, as usual, following public opinion. Tyler<sup>10</sup> had, he hoped, consolidated the Irish vote for Buchanan. The Dallas men were spending money freely and were using the "most desperate exertions" to obtain delegates. Dallas<sup>11</sup> and his brother-in-law, Robert J. Walker, Secretary of Treasury, were not, in Tyler's opinion, excessively cordial for the moment. Tyler was looking to a "recommencement" of his professional duties to provide more comforts for his wife than she had been able to have of late.

In February Clay had a large reception at Philadelphia. Tyler men thought he could be defeated and "sighed" for his nomination.<sup>12</sup> There was evidently a plan on foot to have recommendations to the coming Democratic State Convention by districts. Tyler thought it more important the Convention should vote on Buchanan, then *unanimously* confirm him by a one by one vote. Every delegate should support a resolution that the Convention should send to the National Convention "as many known and tried Buchanan men as the State is entitled to electors." Any one refusing to subscribe would be classed as one who sought to destroy the influence of the State at the coming National Convention at Baltimore. The treaty had killed Cass. "The country will sustain a treaty.

If made against Clay, it will beat him to death." A reason for Buchanan's claim on all Mexico in contrast with his reticence in beginning the war or asking for territory is perhaps noticeable in Tyler's comment on Taylor, "Against Taylor we require a cry for the *whole of Mexico*—something that looks over and beyond Palo Alto, Monterey, and Buena Vista." The Convention in May found Tyler highly disgusted at the tactics employed against Buchanan.<sup>13</sup>

Baltimore May 22d 1848

My dear Sir/

A set of scoundrels from Pa have been at work here for two days depreciating your claims in every possible manner. They have, I almost fear, turned the Va Delegates. I have seen the delegation tho ..... (many times?) & without exception so far, they express ..... men? ..... a personal preference for you. Three members have promised me to go for you to the last so far. Two young fellows have just come in & I have *inoculated* them. I saw ..... in the room below stairs; he was abusing you, & I took him to task before the crowd. He slunk away like a dog, in a Roomful.

I am really indignant at the course pursued here towards you. There is no effort left untried to poison the delegates against you. Would that I were in the Convention. I feel *assured* one strong, determined bold man, could carry the day. If you have such a man in the Delegation all may yet go right.

But all the elements seem to be raining on your head.

Truly your friend

Hon James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

In 1844 Buchanan,<sup>14</sup> against the advice of Cameron, had stepped aside for Van Buren although he was ready to re-enter the lists when it became evident that the Red Fox could not secure the prize. The year 1848 had brought a second defeat but Buchanan's forces had made a better showing. In reply to Robert Tyler's suggestion that he again seek public honors, Buchanan indicated his desire to retire to private life, "at least for season". He had met defeat "with perfect resignation."<sup>15</sup>

No. 10 South Seventh

Phila July 8th (1848)

*Private*

My dear Sir/

I have been intending to write to you for some time past, but one thing or another, principally my own private cares, have prevented me.

I want now to say to you briefly, that I am greatly alarmed at the political aspect of affairs in this Country at this time. The South, I have but little doubt is by this time convinced that it ought to have sustained the Missouri Compromise Candidate at Baltimore. After your letter on that subject, looking both to North & South I never thought of hesitancy as to my course. I distinctly foresaw the present state

of things, & regarded as I do now the Missouri Compromise as the strong hope & sheet Anchor of the Country. Now I beg leave to say to you what I have written to others, that the Democratic Party will be destroyed—literally torn up from its foundations, & the Union greatly imperilled unless Congress interfere & quiet the “perturbed spirit” of the Wilmot Proviso with the Missouri Compromise applied to New Territory. We cannot resist the “free soil & free labor” cry in the nonslaveholding States, *under any circumstances*, if the question be left open. And if Genl Cass be *defeated* as “entre nous” he will certainly be, the very foundations of the party will be swept up as with a deluge. I look to Pennsylvania for 1852, but we must maintain the organization & structure of the Party.

I do not know what course you intend to pursue after the present administration ceases. You *ought* to return to the Senate, or you should be elected the Governor of this State.<sup>16</sup>

Very truly your friend & obedient Servant  
Hon James Buchanan Ro: Tyler

Washington, July 13, 1848<sup>17</sup>

(Private)

My Dear Sir:

I owe you many thanks for your kind letter of the 8th instant. Although a man of but few professions, I cannot forbear to say to you that I warmly appreciate and reciprocate your friendship. Nothing could

gratify me more than to witness your prosperity and your elevation to that high standing, both personal and political, which is due equally to your commanding talents and your excellent heart. The day is rapidly approaching when you will be properly estimated.

It is my fixed determination to retire to private life, at least for a season, at the close of the present administration. I have already written several letters to different friends throughout the State in reference to their inquiries, stating positively that I shall not be a candidate, either for the office of Governor or that of United States Senator. I could not fully explain my reasons for this course in a letter without taking up too much of your and my time; but I am convinced that in a conversation of half an hour I could satisfy you that I had judged correctly. Besides, my own strong inclination impels me to the shades of private life. I am sick and tired of my present situation.

I bore my defeat at Baltimore with perfect resignation. The conduct of the Virginia delegation alone disturbed my equanimity. To trade me off for the chances of making Mason Vice-President, and then to fail so signally in the attempt, was unworthy the Ancient Dominion. "How are the mighty fallen!" I have no doubt that in abandonint me the delegates did not obey the will of their constituents. I think the prospect is tolerably fair that the slavery question will be settled before the close of the present sessions, by the adoption of the Missouri Compromise, or something like it.

It is yet too soon to form a correct opinion in regard to the result of the presidential election; but from present appearances, I think the chances are in favor of Cass and Butler. Beyond the limits of New York it is believed that Van Buren will take more votes from Taylor than from Cass. According to my present estimate, Cass will receive the electoral votes of Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. These States give one hundred and forty-four electoral votes, whilst one hundred and forty-six are necessary to an election. To make up the deficiency, we have a fair prospect of carrying South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, and are not without hopes of Georgia and Tennessee. Taylor's nomination has not been any where hailed with the enthusiasm which I had anticipated.

From your friend, very respectfully

James Buchanan.

The Democrats fought a hard and long fight. In September Tyler wanted Buchanan to come and circulate at Philadelphia.<sup>18</sup> Judge Campbell, prominent Catholic lawyer and future Postmaster General of Pierce, was working for Buchanan as was also Forney. "A desperate effort will be made to take this state from you, but I am sure with a little firmness and effort, it cannot be done," wrote Tyler, and added, "Pennsylvania and the South united cannot be beat."

This last formula was Buchanan's pet combination for over thirty years. As a postscript Tyler truly could add, "It is my opinion that the stand taken by the Democracy of Pennsylvania saved the Union and she deserves and must have her reward." Pennsylvania had stood by the rights of the South and the Buchanan men had made war upon Wilmot and his proviso. The Pennsylvanian was defending Southern rights, warning all good Irishmen of the dangers of aristocracy and praising the anti-British bias of Cass. Buchanan made one of his timely pre-election addresses in October which Tyler declared "will have the effect to give you the *South* hereafter, no matter what others do or say."<sup>19</sup>

During the years 1849-1850 Buchanan was active in allaying sectional strife and "ultra" in defending the constitutional rights of the South. Against his advice the South and the Democracy in general accepted the Compromise of 1850. Buchanan was ever a regular party man and readily accepted the decision. Enough material has been given in this study to show that he regarded the fiat of a party convention ever the highest expression of the law and the prophets.

Buchanan endorsed the Compromise of 1850 in a lengthy public letter urging the people to stand by the Union. At the same time he expressed to Doctor Foltz as naval surgeon and native of Lancaster his conviction that four years would see the peaceful dissolution of the Confederacy. By a little reading between the lines one can see Buchanan's apprehension

while he struck cords of optimism. Nevertheless he wrote after the manner of Webster during the same period. "Should this (the Compromise) be disregarded and nullified by the citizens of the North, the Southern people may become united, and then farewell, a long farewell, to our blessed Union."<sup>20</sup> This did not mean that Buchanan in any way desired the dreaded event, but he well understood the temper of the Southern people and knew what would be the result of the continued attacks of the Abolitionists upon their sensibilities.

Tyler's reactions on what policy the South ought to take are plainly indicated just after the elections of 1850 in a letter to Wise. Perhaps it ought to be stated that later documents indicate a hope on the part of Tyler that Pennsylvania and perhaps Maryland, New Jersey, and Delaware would join the South and leave New England out in the cold. Thus peace would come to a distracted union.

No: 10 South 7th Street,<sup>21</sup>  
Philadelphia, Nov: 18/50.

My dear Sir:

I mail to you this morning, the last two numbers written by me from the "Pilot." Perhaps you will glance over them. I am now satisfied that the South can find salvation only in one line of policy, terrible as it may appear, and that is *secession*. The late compromise measures give Southern Institutions an existence of twenty years only. If those measures be not

altered, 'a continuence in the Union will prove destructive to the Slaveholding States, just as soon as that the sun will rise tomorrow. Mr. Ritchie is falsifying every fact as it transpires at the North. There is now no doubt whatever of the fact that, New York, the whole of New England & the whole of the Northwest, as regards both Whigs and Democrats are Abolitionists to the heart. If the South would unite on one common platform & demand their terms of the North, without delay, there might be a chance of remedying those causes which are now history on the ruin of the South in the Union. The North not as yet being sufficiently powerful to enforce obedience, & fearing a dissolution in all probability would yield up abolitionism as a peace offering, and also agree to such provisions as would preserve our equilibrium in the Senate between the Sections. But if the Slaveholding States continue to talk without acting, in a few years they will not have even the privilege of talking.

Believe me, my dear Sir, I most deeply sympathize with you in your late-lamentable affliction, and sincerely trust that God will provide for you under it comfort & consolation.

Yours most truly,  
John Tyler Jr.

Hon. Henry A. Wise  
Accomac Co.

\* Judge Campbell's candidacy for a place on the bench of the Supreme Court in Pennsylvania in 1851

was a very important event in the history of the party. He was an able and honest man but was a Catholic.<sup>22</sup> Since Tyler was the friend of the large Irish element in his district he was naturally most interested in his nomination. The Irish were certainly entitled to have so worthy a candidate who was then a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in the city of Philadelphia, for the state bench.

No. 10 S. Seventh

Jany 7 (1851)

*Private*<sup>23</sup>

My dear Sir/

As I hoped & suspected would be the case Campbell has carried the City by a vote of 60 delegates against 25; & the County by some 40 Majority as it appears. He is thus entitled to & will no doubt receive the City & County Vote in the State Convention.

He is informed of the interest you have taken in his future & feels very much obliged & very grateful for it.

It seems to me that we have pretty well broken the back of the old opposition here. Will you not give me some credit for courage, perseverance & tact? I am conscious that many of your good-honest-fat-lazy friends here have uttered (?) their disapproval of my policies in some respects but it certainly occurred to me at my first glance over the field when I came here that the first movement should be directed to the disintegration of that powerful Hiser (Hines?)—Dallas

—Page (sic) league that I found in possession of power. It is quite certain that at this hour there are no two shreds of the old Opposition hanging together. We must now improve our opportunities & establish formidable fortunate and efficient organization here. Make your friends cooperate (i e) the old hands—but be very cautious what you write to any one.

Campbell should now be nominated *at all events* by the State Convention. It will give us much strength & he is worth any twelve men who may aspire in the City & County. I would advise you to put your active power in motion to that end.

Old York seems true—<sup>24</sup> The Delegates here are all for Bigler of course.

I shall of course be always happy to hear from you. I support you because I think it right to do so, & while I desire & would be proud of your friendly regard, solicit no special (?) favor on earth

Very truly & respectfully

Yr friend Ro: Tyler

Hon: James Buchanan

No. 186 Ronaldson Row

May 3d 1851

My dear Sir/

Since<sup>25</sup> my return & a conversation had with Judge Campbell I am convinced we shall do better in the Lancaster Delegate question than I intimated when conversing with you on the subject. *Judge Campbell* is decidedly of this opinion.

I am rejoiced to state that every hour appears to confirm and strengthen our good prospects. Unless I am indulging in the most shocking miscalculations you will have the support of the City & County of Philadelphia without fail. Good, substantial men are joining our ranks every day & I wish you to feel that my vigilance on this subject never slumbers. My colleague John Cadwallader a gentleman every inch & a most accomplished & learned Lawyer is active in his support of your claims. I saw on yesterday Peter Fisher (?) Matthew Vendeveer Henry Delany Enoch Cullan (?) & one or two very respectable & wealthy Citizens of Kensington (?) my own very warm personal friends & they will all support you. So will Hugh Clark. I saw him a day or two ago & informed him of your kind feelings towards him. Frank Clinton is a little "out with you" & he is an important man. He says he saved your election once to be a Senator & you disregarded some letter he wrote you while Sec: of State in favor of his brother for a Commission in the Mexican Service. But everything looks fair & bright in the main.

Present my respectful compliments to your niece Miss Lane & to Mrs. Baker\*\*

& believe me truly yr friend

Robt. Tyler

Hon James Buchanan

I have received a copy of the Union\*\* & a prospectus, from Mr. Donelson. I have just finished

quite a lengthy & a very strong (in point of language) letter to him. He was silly enough to notice the Phila Statesman & he is wasting too much time on New York. I have given him some good doctrine & Ethics in connection with your name & the clarion of old Pennsylvania.

In order to defeat Campbell the Whigs nominated among others Justice Coulter who was a moderate Democrat and on the bench at the time.

For the governorship the Democrats placed in the field Senator William Bigler, one of the Clearfield Democrats, a man interested in lumbering who had married well and had served his constituents faithfully. His brother, John Bigler, was elected Governor in California when he was elected to the same office in this home state. Bigler had a most pleasing personality which Robert Tyler's letters confirm and is one of the most refreshing figures in Pennsylvania politics. His was the popularity which honesty and faithfulness often bring to a man. "His kindly bearing towards even political opponents made him a favorite; besides he was a real backwoodsman, was a good hunter, and the best marksman with a rifle in all the country—accomplishments in those days by no means detracted from his influence as a political leader."\*\* On the national issues he was a sound "national" Democrat.\*\* Tyler's attitude toward Bigler's candidacy is fully indicated in the following.

## BIGLER CLUB, NO. 2.

The second regular meeting<sup>o</sup> of Bigler Club, No. 2, was held at the public house of Samuel W. Whitehill, on Saturday evening last, and although the night was very dark and rainy, the large front room and the one adjacent were crowded full.—The minutes of the preceding meeting were read and unanimously adopted. Dr. N. B. Wolfe then addressed the Association, and spoke at length of the character and public services of Hon. James Buchanan, and the brilliant administration of the lamented Polk. At the conclusion of his remarks, he read the following patriotic and truly Pennsylvania letter, which was responded to with enthusiastic applause:

No. 186, Ronaldson, Row)

Philadelphia, April 11, 1851.)

My Dear Sir:—I wish it was in my power to visit Columbia with the view of complying with your invitation, tendered in behalf of Bigler Club No. 2, to address that patriotic body of citizens. I am already under an engagement to address Club No. 1, in Lancaster city, on the 26th inst., which I shall have to comply with at serious inconvenience. My professional duties are such as to require my constant attendance here. I must, however, avail myself of this opportunity to say, that I cordially concur in the object of your association. My acquaintance with Col. Bigler has induced me to form a high estimate of his talents and business qualifications, and to ap-

preciate fully the prudence, modesty and manliness that constitute the leading feature of his political character; and I feel well convinced, that he will not only be nominated by the Democratic State Convention in June, but elected by the people next fall to the Gubernatorial office. What I like about him best, is that I believe he has in his heart the true feeling that should characterize every Pennsylvanian. He has, I am sure, a disinterested and enthusiastic devotion for the interests, honor, advancement and historical reputation of his native State, not measured or influenced in any respect by considerations of dollars and cents—by narrow personal prejudices against particular men, or by expectations of office. For let me say that, while we all have reason to look with great satisfaction upon the wealth, the thrift, the industry and the physical resources of the State, we must not forget that the future prosperity, power and fame, as well as the estimation in which it will be held by the other American States, and by all other nations too, will depend in no small degree, upon the moral and intellectual light shed over our beloved and honored Commonwealth, by the genius and illustrious public services of our distinguished public men. A Nation or State to be truly great, must produce great men. In history they appear in their characters and services, the proudest monuments of a nation's glory. Now you will allow me to say that, other than Pennsylvania, I know of no State in the Union that has failed to support and cherish with unanimity its own



accomplished Statesmen, and all proper times to indicate a determination to advance them by their encouragement, approval and support to the highest honors of the Republic. Pennsylvania seems to have had no ambition for the Presidency, or else to have made the fatal mistake that its possession would be worthless. Many citizens think that Pennsylvania has certain important interests peculiar to herself. It is possible that they do not clearly perceive that these interests, whatever they may be, might be secured with some real effect, if Pennsylvania, instead of consenting as she has heretofore done, to be the mere tail of Federal politics, would seek to hold in the person of one of her own great and patriotic citizens, the substantial and lofty power, by which she might shape events and give direction to public affairs.

But I will not detain you longer. I wish to be understood as sincerely and heartily recognizing the idea of State nationality, and that now, and hereafter, no matter what others may do, I am first—always for Pennsylvania.

Truly your friend and obedient servant,

R. O. TYLER.

Dr. N. B. Wolfe, Columbia, Pa.

Letters were then read in reply to invitations extended by the Committee of Arrangements, to address our Club, from Hon. John Cessna, of Bedford, Col. John W. Forney, of Philadelphia, and W. H. Welsh, Esq., of York, all of whom have consented to address

our Association at whatever time we may fix upon. The 'Club Roll' was then signed by a number of gentlemen; and Mr. Cline gave us one of his inimitable 'talks,' amidst much cheering. Three cheers were then given for Col. Bigler, when on motion of Adam Maxten, the meeting adjourned to meet on Saturday evening, May 3rd, in the Town Hall. Adjourned.

J. J. Gault, President.

C. M. Strein, Secretary.

186 Ronaldson's Row

May 18, 1851

*Private*!

My dear Sir:

Your letter of yesterday on the Lancaster question is very clear in its statements & perfectly satisfactory. I really think there will be no contest worth speaking of & that your Delegates will be admitted to their seats by a large Majority of votes in the Convention. Our City & County Delegates will be nearly unanimous. We shall lose I believe 3 or 4 at most.

Col. Bigler has been here & came to see me. He is very cautious. I learn from others in what he says or does. I had no sufficient opportunity to converse with him fully. He is right I am sure on all the leading points & I like him so well that I am disposed to turn a deaf ear to the dissatisfaction expressed by others. There is however a general complaint since he left the City that he did not seem to know while

here in what direction the Democratic Party lay in the City & County I take it that he knows all this well enough but wishes to conciliate all persons as far as he may reasonably do so.

Had you not better visit Philadelphia for a week or two. Your presence here would be highly agreeable to your friends & would also no doubt be 'highly profitable to the cause.'

Who is the best man for the next Canal Commission? Our delegates stand divided between Campbell & Clives. There is one man certainly for Searight (?), & two others incline that way. I have always regarded Mr. Searight as a pledged Cameron man. Yet I am informed that he is supported in his pretensions by a number of your best & strongest friends in the West. Is this so?— Now I have but little doubt that after the Convention in June the opposition to you in the State will be nearly at an end. No matter who may be Canal Commissioner we shall overwhelm our opponents in the *direct circle*. But nevertheless the next Canal Commissioner should be a sound & judicious friend if we can get him. I am willing to do whatever you deem best.

Very truly yr friend

Robt. Tyler

Hon: James Buchanan

No. 42 South Sixth Street,  
Philadelphia, June 27, 1851.

(Duplicate)\*\*

The Hon. J. Glancey Jones\*\*

William Strong

Men of the Com:

Gentlemen:

I have had the honor to receive your letter conveying to me an invitation on behalf of the Democracy of Berks County, to join them at Reading, where they propose suitably to celebrate the approaching anniversary of American Independence. I have long taught to entertain a profound respect for the tried and consistent Democracy of Old Berks, and it would afford me no ordinary satisfaction to avail myself of your kind notice for the 4th, but a prior engagement with my fellow citizens of the city and county of Philadelphia in reference to an occasion similar to your own, will detain me here. It is a pleasing sign of the times, to witness the unanimity of opinion which induces the citizens of the State in every county in it, and, in most cases in many different localities of the same county, to prepare with an enthusiasm I have never before seen, to distinguish by their grateful homage & devotion, our great national anniversary. It strikes me as exhibiting at the same time a grateful attachment to the Union & the Constitution, and a resolute hostility to those fanatical & disorganizing persons who are attempting their subversion. The tone of the resolutions & sentiments uttered at all of these

patriotic gatherings will, I have little doubt, clearly evince this fact.

In conclusion permit me to say that we all have a right to feel proud and gratified at the position occupied by our beloved & honored Commonwealth. Firm, moderate & decided in her views of Constitutional duty, she has steadily maintained her political equilibrium, and has resisted all efforts made to draw her into any scheme of sectional agitation & excitement. All those who love the Union, revere the laws and desire the prevalence of wise counsels at this perilous crisis, have a right to rejoice at this attitude of Pennsylvania. I trust she may always be as true as she is now to her best interests & highest dignity.

Most respectfully  
Your friend & obedient servant,  
RO. TYLER.

I beg to offer the following sentiment.

Pennsylvania! The Defender of the Constitution! The preserver of the Union! She deserves the respect & gratitude of every true American.

State Senator William Bigler was elected Governor and filled the post very creditably. Judge Campbell was defeated.<sup>32</sup> Some Democrats blamed Cameron for the anti-Catholic propaganda which defeated him. Bigler now staunched the party wounds somewhat by making Campbell his Attorney-General, a place which he filled with great credit. We shall

later see Campbell Postmaster General in the cabinet of Pierce.

During his governorship, Bigler displeased Buchanan and the two were for a time on no cordial terms. On the eve of Buchanan's return from England in 1855, Bigler wrote Buchanan a letter and a cordial reconciliation was the result.

No. 71 National Hotel  
November 30, '51

My dear Mr. Buchanan/

You have no doubt seen the success that has attended the Pennsylvania movement in the Democratic Caucus? Boyd for Speaker, Forney for Clerk?<sup>33</sup>

It is a Buchanan organization & so clearly recognized altho' *we* are *politic* on the subject.

I am glad to inform you (and in my best handwriting too!) that you have an able, efficient & *enthusiastic* body of friends at your back—friends *personal & political*, who speak of you in bold & confident terms & advocate your claims & those of our great old State fearless of Consequences.

The *Union Resolutions* (so called) are slain outright. It was plainly a political concern and so intended; and I understand it originated with Cobb who is friendly, but its passage in Caucus would have *nationally* injured your prospects. As it is we have nearly consolidated the whole South (democratic) & have greatly conciliated N York & Ohio! I made it my business to put as far as I could & I believe quite

successfully the opposition to the resolution into shape & consistency.

Ben Thomas is torpid! Dawson frightened!

In my opinion no effort will prove successful (even if attempted) to defeat the Caucus action. Our policy is good-will & Peace is the aim.

The Moral effect of the present position of things is "immense" as Forney says.

The issue was this—shall the Democrats (secession) be forced to join the Unionists at their tail end—or shall the Union Democrats be forced back with the old Democratic organization. If the crisis is properly managed by the conciliation of two or three leading Union Democrats the latter result can be accomplished.

Stokes-Vandyke-M. Dingle (?) Conway-Martin Westcott McKeon &c—are here. Did you get Pendleton's Despatch?

Truly yr friend

Ro: Tyler

(James Buchanan to R. Tyler.)<sup>35A</sup>

Wheatland, near Lancaster, Jan. 8 1852

My Dear Sir: I have received your kind letter of the 6th.

You have, indeed, performed all and more than all that you ever promised. To have lost the city and county would have been political destruction; to have gained them, enables me to breathe deeper and freer.

Thanks to the glorious Democracy of the city and county, the question is no longer who shall have the majority, but what shall it be in this State.

I believe we shall carry the city and county of Lancaster. We have the Democracy by an overwhelming majority if they will only turn out to the delegate elections. My friends are active and busy, and have sufficient means; yet I shall make no confident prediction.

I know not how to conciliate the Van Burens. I never quarreled with them; but sacrificed myself in '43 and '44—now one of the heaviest charges against me in the interior of the State—to give Mr. Van Buren a unanimous nomination. We must have some more active friends in Washington, even if we have to send them there.

With kindest regards for Mrs. Tyler, and best wishes for the young stranger, I remain, in haste, gratefully and respectfully your friend,

James Buchanan.

A keen desire on the part of two Buchanan men to go to the convention as delegates caused some trouble and Tyler joined James C. Van Dyke, another Buchanan leader in the Quaker City, urged Buchanan to "write one of your most soothing letters" to each of the aspirants.<sup>36</sup> The following letter<sup>37</sup> to Cameron, Buchanan's most powerful enemy in Pennsylvania, shows a Southerner on the warpath:

Philadelphia, March 21st, 1852

Sir:

I addressed you a note more than ten days since in reference to certain offensive remarks said to have been made by you at Harrisburg concerning myself.

I expect a distinct and positive answer to my letter on the points it contains. This is a matter which does not admit of compromise or silence. I must have an answer. No man can live to slander my character in the terms that have been ascribed to you. You must either deny or retract, just as the case may be.

Your obt. svt.

Robert Tyler

Hon. Simon Cameron

The following letter of Buchanan to the brilliant and erratic Wise is typical of Buchanan's careful attention to his chosen field, politics. He shows his skill in dealing with men like Wise whilst modestly disclaiming that very skill and there is a suggestion of a certain dreaminess in the first paragraph which is rather rare in Buchanan's usual type of letter. The letter, if carefully read, is a character study of Wise by Buchanan.

Wheatland, " near Lancaster 13 April 1852.

My dear Sir/

On my return from Philadelphia, I have received your epistle from Norfolk. I would write you at length; but have no assurance that my letter will reach

you, at "that out of the way of the world place," before you shall leave it for Richmand. Good luck to your meditations there; I wish I could have you with me here for a few days. We might convert my woods into the groves of the Academy & I should become your disciple in moral philosophy. You say I am a prudent man; but in political tact I yield to you, after the skill you displayed in the Virginia Convention. I wish from my very soul that our good friend Bob Stockton had possessed a little more of this ycleped "rascally virtue." This wish is sincere though unselfish. But he will overcome his imprudence. Webster has always been a favorite with him.

I have some news from New York & Ohio, derived from authentic sources. Certainly this is so from the first mentioned State. Of the delegates to the Baltimore Convention recently assembled at Albany including the two Senatorial delegates elected there, Cass will have fourteen votes & Marcy 21. Of these 21, six are Marcy Hunkers & 15 Barnburners. These all desire to defeat Cass; because they wish to re-unite the party & carry the State. After Marcy I am informed they will go for me; but I do not place implicit reliance upon this opinion although I have reason to know, that next to himself, Marcy is sincerely my friend. My correspondent adds in a postscript;—"John Van Buren does not object to you;—any one to beat Cass & Croswell is all he asks."

The Ohio Delegates stand 11 for Allen, 3 for Cass, 5 for Douglass, 1 for Houston & 1 for Butler

Kennon of S Clairsville, one of the 11, although instructed for Allen personally prefers Cass.— Thus far all is authentic. My correspondent who is an Allen man assures me that the friends of Allen will never under any circumstances go for Cass or Douglass; but when they drop Allen will support me. This may or may not be so. Certain it is that Allen for the last few months has been in the habit of speaking very kindly of me.

But I promise I would not write you a long letter. Please to let me hear from you at Richmond. In the mean time believe me to be ever gratefully your friend

James Buchanan

Hon: Henry A. Wise.

About the same time John Tyler Jr. discussed<sup>22</sup> the political situation with the Governor as follows:

42 South 6th Street  
Philadelphia  
April 16/52

My dear Sir:

Yours in reply to my "big one" and short one is at hand. The consultation being over the thing is decided. There, as you say, let it rest. Robert knew nothing of my letter to you, or of my private views on the subject. He has been, is, and will be "all the time," "first and last" a Buchanan Man. It is to his interest to be so and is a part of his policy looking to

*his own future.* I was prompted to write you as I did because I wish to see Justice done before it was too late for it to be done, and because I thought it could be done, and still believe it, though *I shall say and do no more*, relying upon your judgment and acknowledging your Right to advise. It is entirely evident to my mind that Cass and Buchanan will eat each other up, and therefore, that we shall be forced to look elsewhere in the end.

New York will go *first* for Marcy, *secondly* for Buchanan—Pennsylvania and Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and Alabama will sustain him also. Mississippi gives him force enough to prevent the nomination of Cass. But the latter will have as large if not larger force than Buchanan in the Convention.

There is one thing you may rely on, and that is this: I shall be perfectly content with the man that Robert and yourself prefer. That man is Buchanan. He may be a safe man for the country, but I do not like his antecedents.

Yours always faithfully  
John Tyler, Jr.

Hon. Henry A. Wise  
Virginia

The following letter shows that Buchanan was anxious to keep Wise's followers in line. He subscribed as he had done many times before to the creed of 1798 and '99 and hoped for the best, despite the

ever present protective tariff demands made on the Democrats in Pennsylvania.

Wheatland,<sup>40</sup> near Lancaster 31 March '52.

My dear Sir:

I have received your very kind letter of the 27 ultimo. I return you my grateful acknowledgement for the information it contains. Mr. Wise has written me to the same effect. He says that four to one of the delegates were my political friends. Had they expressed their preference, this would, I think, have decided the question. Still I am not only content but deeply grateful.

You do not over estimate Mr. Wise. I have known him long and known him well and he is one of the jewels of which the old Dominion may well be proud. Able, energetic, of powerful will and of commanding eloquence, he is destined to fill a large space in the politicks (sic) of the country. For my own part, I am warmly attached to him and should be glad to witness his elevation to the distinguished position in the esteem of his country he so well deserves and will so certainly reach.

What a state Virginia is! How true to principles and how steady in conduct! The humbugs of the day make no impression on her constant mind. An administration of the Federal Government founded upon her ancient principles of 1798 and 1799 can alone save the country from a latitudinous construction of the Constitution and a wasteful and extravagant

expenditure of the public money. In this State the Democracy will have to contend against a protective Whig Tariff; but give us any popular and well qualified candidate for the presidency and we do not fear the result.

from your friend

very respectfully

Hon: C. Neale

James Buchanan

42 South 6 Street,  
Phil. April 4, '52

My dear Sir:

I enclose you one of my letters. It backs up your position in the Convention unless I mistake. I mean it to tell for Buchanan first—for father next & it is at least Historically true.

By the by have you got a long letter from me recently? The convictions of that letter are still with me.<sup>41</sup>

God bless you,

Honble Henry A. Wise

John Tyler Jr.

Buchanan declared that his defeat caused him not a pang but that he felt sorry over the disappointment it brought to his friends.<sup>42</sup> He may have worried lest his supporters might look for a luckier man, thus set up a new favorite son and thus put him in the "wall flower" class. Nevertheless he was careful not to express any apprehension. If he had any fear it was over his position as leader in his own state

rather than any concern for the nomination. He expressed much satisfaction over the loyalty of his friends in the convention.<sup>42</sup> John Tyler, Jr. saw in nominating Pierce the passing of the old leaders and hence a better chance for his friend Wise to gain greater honors. Two letters<sup>43</sup> to Wise on June 23 and July 26 read as follows:

42 South 6th Street  
Philadelphia  
June 23, 1852

My dear Sir:

I enclose something concerning you taken from the "New York Atlas" of the 20th inst. And this I do because I wish to know whether it will meet your present policy to have the article republished here. That you are destined to be in the lead of the Democracy here-after—in the very frontispiece—I have no more doubt than I have of the shining of the sun at high noon. I see it all. The only question is what is *policy* now. I wish at least to preserve the article for future use, though you should think it best not now to use it, and therefore would be obliged to you to return it to me, as I might fail in getting another copy.

Believe now what I say to you. Robert is by far the best man for you here. He has more strength than any other dozen men in the party in the city and county of Philadelphia. In truth the party here is on his shoulders, it matters not what is said to the contrary. He could crush Campbell and the "Pennsyl-

vanian" combined in *one week* if he chose, just as he crushed last year Page and the "Spirit of the Times." I say this merely that you may know how and through whom to strike for Pennsylvania when the time comes. As for myself you know that I would fight six duels for you and think it fine sport.

The nomination of Pierce gives birth to a new era in the history of Democracy throughout the country. The old leaders may be considered dead and buried—they cannot now be resurrected. *Our way is therefore open and the suppressed sentiment of the people is with us everywhere.*

Yours always truly

Hon. Henry A. Wise

John Tyler, Jr.

42 South 6 Th, Phila. July 26/52<sup>43</sup>

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 21st with the article from the Atlas reached me this morning. The article was republished here in the "Argus," and I sent you a copy. I do not think you will object to the manner in which it is done. I am very happy that you have met with Father once more & had some talk with him. His letters in behalf of Pierce will do much good, & his own reputation will now appear in its true light.

You are entirely right as to Mr. Buchanan. He should undoubtedly be called to the State Department under Pierce. / The South should demand this to be done, on the ground that he has been tried and not found wanting; *on the ground that he is necessary to*



*them in connection with the administration.* This is the right way of accomplishing the result. *Let the South demand it.* My sincere hope & confidence belief is that Buchanan will be called to the State Department—C. Cushing to the Treasury Department, yourself to the War or Navy, and General Shield to the Interior. Such an arrangement and the history of the next four years would be bright & glorious for the Country & for the Democratic party.

If I would do with you as I would like, I would do this. Have you thrown at the head of the War Dept. under Pierce for two years—the first two of his administration. Then at the close of that period, have you elected Governor of Virginia so as to give you two years in that office prior to the close of 1856, and to back you with the strength of Virginia; & then place you on the *presidential* track. Can't all this be done? I think so if you have your wits about you.

As for Douglas he is dead forever. In the west he is killed by the Cass men. Here he is killed by the Buchanan men. Besides which General Lane will completely destroy him with the North West in view of the Presidency in 1856. Robert will attend to him as you desire. The next fight in all probability will be between Lane of the West, Stockton of the Middle States (unless Buchanan should again be run) and I trust yourself on the part of the South, provided the suggestion just made be acted upon by you. I wish of course & talk in this way (at this time) *only to yourself.* The main fight next time must be between the

South & North West, so at least, it seems to me.

General Scott will carry Vermont & Rhode Island, but it is more than doubtful that he will not carry another State in the Union. We are certain of 24 states.

Believe me always yours truly,

John Tyler, Jr.

Hon: Henry A. Wise Esq.

During the campaign Robert Tyler was careful to defend Pierce's liberality towards those of the Catholic faith. Pierce had favored the removal of constitutional disabilities in New Hampshire a few years prior to his nomination.<sup>44</sup> Nor was he less zealous in defending his father's administration against an attack in the *Pennsylvanian*. It was another brush with Forney.<sup>45</sup>

July 20 1852

No. 62 S. Sixth Street

Phila.

My Dear Sir:

I am sorry to say that I have been twice compelled to call the attention of Mr. Hope to paragraphs published in the *Pennsylvanian* calculated to reflect discredibly on Ex-President Tyler & his administration. He addressed me in a kind note in reply to my last communication on this subject, and promised that nothing of the sort should again occur. What was

my indignation & surprise to find the enclosed unjust & malicious editorial in the leading column of the Pennsylvanian this morning?

I have hesitated upon the alternative of addressing you this letter, or of at once denouncing to the Democracy of the country, state and county this impolitic, pernicious & scandalous statement, and have finally concluded to address myself to you.

The charge is a wholesale & gross allegation of corruption made against Mr. Tyler's administration. Why should any man indulge in the wicked & malicious pleasure of making a charge so vilely slanderous, so utterly insufficient, so flagrantly cowardly & base? I defy any man on earth to prove one single act of corrupt administration by Ex-President Tyler. He administered the govt. *without the loss of a single dollar to the treasury*, and at the close of his term of office the prosperity of the country was the subject of universal congratulation. I take pleasure in referring you in proof of what I say to the columns of the Washington Union Richmond (Va) Enquirer, Charleston Mercury & every Democratic press of any standing in the country.

But it is not my intention to argue the question.

Two things I take for granted: 1st. That altho you did not write or counsel this article in question, you still control the course of the Pennsylvanian. 2d. That Mr. Hope suffered the article to be published, for I will not charge him with insincerity without scrutiny. But no matter how it occurred this fal-

sification of truth to plain history ought to be & must be corrected in just as public a manner as it has been made. Mr. Tyler has already toiled & suffered & served enough in the cause of the Constitution, & Democracy to be let alone in private life. He deserves respect & not outrage at this day & his friends, if no sense of propriety & justice can prevail with others; *will* have it so. The worst feature of such shameless indecency is that it is wanton, maliciously wanton,—it is mean in its gross untruth—it is contemptible in its cowardice. My indignation makes me egotistic and let me say to you that when the man whose administration destroyed the idea of Federal Banking in this Union forever—who paid the monstrous public debt contracted during Van Buren's administration & left millions in the treasury—the author of the annexation of Texas, the man who with the public moneys in his own keeping did not lose for four years a dollar of the people's money—the man who delivered the keys of the treasury & of the "White House" to a Democratic successor for four years (not always done) when this man shall seek some measure of reward for his sufferings & his services from our party it will then be time enough to abuse & calumniate & to mis-represent him. Till then he asks & his friends *require* justice & truth; & those who refuse this must take the responsibility of their own foolish & wicked conduct.

Very truly yours,

Jno. W. Forney Esq.

ROBT. TYLER

Philadelphia\*\*

August 16th, 185

Gentlemen:

It would afford me great satisfaction to answer your kind invitation to attend a mass convention of the Democracy of New Hampshire, at Hillsborough, on the 19th inst. by being personally present on so interesting and gratifying an occasion. But circumstances of a private nature will not prevent me to indulge in the pleasure of such a visit. Without unnecessarily consuming your time, permit me to congratulate you on the happy auspices attendant upon the Democratic Party forshadowing success in November next. The triumphant restoration of the government to the control and guidance of the party of the people, seems now to be assured and certain. And unless I have studied his history without reflection, we shall have in General Pierce, a President who will during his administration vigilantly guard all the provisions of the Constitution and the Rights of the States from invasion and encroachment. He will take care to serve the whole Union and to preserve the Union whole.

Very respectfully

Your obt. servt.

ROBERT TYLER

To John H. George

George W. Morrison

A. B. Williamson

George H. Pierce

A. J. Vaugher

Comm. of arrangement

Brother John also warnèd Governor Wise that  
Forney was both dangerous and hostile to the South.\*\*

42 South 6th Street

Philadelphia

September 16, 1852

My dear Sir:

There is a movement afloat here to the effect that John W. Forney has become, or is about to become, associated with the Washington "Union," under the idea that that paper will be made the Government organ of Pierce's administration. Now if that paper should be made the Government organ, John W. Forney should not be permitted to touch it. He is not to be trusted one inch by the South. I have good reason to know that he has been treacherous to the South and even to Mr. Buchanan ever since his election as clerk of the H of R. That he is a man destitute of moral principles is not to be questioned. In that respect he is as rotten as a dish cloth. I presume he has no chance for a reelection as Clerk, and if he has, that chance should be destroyed. The South ought not again to trust him anywhere. He sent a Cass man here to take charge of the Pennsylvanian, and that paper has been striking at some of the best friends of Mr. Buchanan ever since, so that after this presidential fight is over, it will be a question whether that Journal shall not be demolished.

I write merely to give you timely warning con-

cerning a man who I believe to be morally and politically corrupt and perfidious.

Your always truly  
John Tyler, Jr.

Hon. Henry A. Wise  
Virginia

The election over, John Tyler, Jr. discussed cabinet appointments with Wise. There was evidently no hostility between Wise and Hunter at this time. Buchanan was rumored for Secretary of State."

42 South 6th Street  
Philadelphia  
December 8, 1852

My dear Sir:

In confidence I send you a private note just received from Mr. Orr. Can he be trusted under it? It seems my conversation with Collins and my letter to Orr, about you, have introduced a better feeling towards you. But can I trust them?

I hate to give you up for the Cabinet, but if you say that I am to fight for Hunter, I shall do so. Did I understand you to say *positively* that Mr. Buchanan *would not* enter the Cabinet though the State Department was tendered him? We have *all* here been led to think otherwise. Indeed it has been put forth from persons near to him that the place was already tendered him and that he would accept. It is very im-

portant that Robert and myself should understand Mr. Buchanan as to this.

Write me if you please, at your earliest convenience, as to these points; so that I may put my pen to work. Say also anything else you please. I have access to the Herald, the Times, the Boston, and various other papers of large circulation.

Yours most truly  
Hon. Henry A. Wise                      John Tyler, Jr.

While Buchanan did not win the prize in 1852 he had had the satisfaction of seeing his "Siamese Twin" Colonel William R. King, "United States Senator from Alabama, nominated for Vice President." Buchanan also had the satisfaction of knowing that King was nominated to conciliate his disappointed followers.

The distribution of patronage by the new Pierce administration naturally became a subject of correspondence in April, 1853. Buchanan had written Pierce that he did not desire to be Secretary of State and received a fine reply from the young President. Later he was urged to take the best post in our diplomatic service, that of Minister to the Court of St. James. Tyler's reactions to this offer appear in the letter of April 5th.

April 2d 1853

*Private*"

My dear Mr Buchanan/

I have just received your letter & hasten to say

that you must not hesitate to command me, personally, or politically, in whatever manner you think most advisable. I shall feel myself honored to be the recipient of your wish.

It is plain that you cannot ask favors of Brown; & then even if you asked he would in nine times out of ten refuse or evade. At any rate after an hour's reflection, I concur with you in your suggestion that you had better relieve yourself from the very unpleasant position in regard to the appl's here. It is a good idea. It will serve as a note of Warning!

It is not Wade—it is Day—Captain Alfred Day. Not a bad fellow—tho' a new-comer among us—a predestinate appt. of Genl Pierce himself!

The President promised (it is said) Westcott<sup>22</sup>—Campbell wished Miller. I had to choose between them, but contented myself with a single letter of recommendation.

It is understood here that *the Ex-Vice-President*<sup>22</sup> of the U States is to be District Attorney—is not this a new phase? I fear Vandyke has no chance?

Robert Ewing (a good man & true) refuses the Treasurership of the Mint! Believe me ever

Yr friend Roby. Tyler<sup>22</sup>

Hon: James Buchanan

Phila. Apr. 5, 1853

*Private*

My dear Sir,

Consult your own judgment entirely as to the

time of writing the note you suggested, or whether you shall write it at all. My own opinion remains unchanged on the subject!

I do not know whether you have been tendered the mission to England. I will take the liberty to say now in the privacy of personal friendship that while at Washington & since I have urged extending this mark of respect & compliment to you (always expressing my opinion that you would hardly accept) as a matter not only of right—but of *expediency*. I took the last ground because of the *meaning implied* in the word.

It is my impression that Vandyke will not be appointed District Attorney. The real contest lies between Knees & Dallas unless I am much mistaken, but the truth is, I have nothing but my own observation to depend on. Judge Campbell has not written me a line since he left for Washington & the whole concern is most dreadfully mysterious.

Of course if I can induce Mr. Miller to appoint Mr. Curran it will be done; but I presume he will not hesitate to accord to your wishes so slight a favor.

Do you think of visiting Phila'ere long? If not I think at some favorable opportunity to come to Wheatland.

very truly yr friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>22</sup>

Hon: James Buchanan

Buchanan first accepted the mission mentioned above, then in view of some patronage trouble thought of declining.<sup>55</sup> Finally after practically being told that his refusal would be embarrassing to the President, he accepted. He expressed his desire to be allowed to return home at the end of two years. A few weeks before his departure Buchanan penned the following invitation and observation to Wise.

Wheatland,<sup>56</sup> near Lancaster 1 June 1853.

My dear Sir/

I returned last night from Washington to this place. I should have written to you the night before but found this to be impossible.

Whilst in Washington, I was engaged in booking myself up as to the duties of the Mission. I did not see much of the President; although I saw him often. Your name was introduced on more than one occasion; & the President spoke of you in as warm terms as your best friend could desire. I think you did wrong in so strongly intimating to them that you desired no office. You might have let the offer come & then have done as you pleased. It afforded them great pleasure to provide for your son, who I regret had left Washington before my arrival there.

From my observations whilst in Washington, I have arrived at the conclusion that the President desires a second term & that the policy of the administration will be directed to this object. And why should he not? He is young; & if he should admin-

ister the Government upon correct democratic principles & with ability & success, he may be re-elected. Marcy has, I think, his eye steadily fixed upon the succession. His case, I consider hopeless; but his aspirations are nearly as warm & as strong, as were those of Mr Clay. For my own, I can say, in all the sincerity of my nature, that I indulge no aspirations of the kind. If there be a melancholy spectacle upon earth it is that of an old man struggling in the political arena for the honors & offices of this world with the same intensity as though it were to be his everlasting habitation.— I heard from several persons in Washington who probably knew nothing about the matter, that Hunter's reason for not accepting the State Department was that it might interfere with his Presidential prospects.

The day of my departure from New York is fixed for Saturday 9th July. How delighted I should be to see you at this place for a few days & talk over with you "the auld lang syne," the present & the future! I think I can see you & hear you, with a quid of old Virginia in your mouth & a glass of genuine Madeira before you, discouraging ex cathedra in your own interesting & impressive style. We will teach you agriculture. I will have any friends within a hundred miles to meet you whom you may desire. I am not so selfish as to ask you to come to see me, if business or pleasure will not bring you to the North; but I trust & hope these may not be wanting. If you will come, as I earnestly trust you may, pray let me

know the time, so that I may certainly be at home.

Ever your friend

Hon Henry A Wise

James Buchanan

The following letter of Robert Tyler to Governor Wise gives his estimate of Buchanan's strength in 1853. By 1856 Dallas had voluntarily ceased to be a rival while Bigler made advances for an alliance with Buchanan. His offer of friendship was accepted.

Phila: Sept. 15, 1853

Private<sup>57</sup>

My dear Sir

I do not mean to intimate that the Democratic Party would not prevail on this state at the fall election. But when we come to make an honest, *necessary*, Southern, Constitutional Platform for '56, the Free-Soil element will exhibit itself to an alarming extent. You may confidently expect a free-soil Rebellion, to which the Buffalo rebellion in '48 will be child's play. Bradshaw and Dawson are directing their influence on a movement for Mr. Dallas, ostensibly intending if practicable to sell out to Mr. Hunter when the time comes. Mr. Dallas has no great popularity, and Mr. Hunter *intrinsically* has but little strength in this state.

Notwithstanding Mr. Buchanan's declarations to you and to myself and others, I still think he will be a candidate. He can carry a *majority* in this state,

but a strong and bitter minority will fight him to the Death. Keep the South united at all hazards. We shall have the devil to pay before long. If you shirk from the contest or divide, the country is lost beyond peradventure.

I had a conversation with Kilman today (ex-member, Congress)—he is against Hunter (so I consider him)—but says he would prefer you next to Buchanan to any man in America. I also had a visit from General Ward of New York (Hard-Shell nominee for Sec'y of State). He says next to Dickinson, he prefers you to any other.

You know best what to do—especially not to quarrel with Hunter. There are many who would like to see yourself & Hunter at loggerheads. But it is quite certain that the people generally would prefer to vote for you to him.

Yr friend

H. Exc. H. A. Wise

Ro. Tyler

The following letter shows the humane feelings of Tyler in a matter of patronage.

Private<sup>58</sup>

Sep. 26, 1853

My dear Sir:

I regret to be compelled to trouble you with a matter that in the pressure of great affairs upon you must be insignificant & only annoying. But my situation is a painful one & on reflection tho' I do so with reluctance, I feel that I am bound to act in this case.\*

There is a young man by the name of Phillips in the Custom House here an inoffensive person of M..... or E..... clerkship of \$900. a year. He is the son-in-law of my doctor friend, Dr. M. Phillips of Bucks county, a physician of eminence & a man of large influence among the Whigs of the county. He is the son of Dr. Phillips of New York City who is the pastor of probably the largest Presbyterian congregation in the country. His family influence is consequently very extensive. Dr. M. Phillips of Bucks County who is growing old &..... of active life has distinctly promised me to retire from the active political field in the event of his son-in-law being retained in office. This I have said to Mr. Franklin V..... the most influential Democrat in the county of Bucks & many of the most respectable Democrats in the town of Bristol (where young Phillips resides) *have signed a letter* (now on file requesting the Collector to retain young Phillips on the ground of *its being advantageous in a party point of view*, as certainly it would be. Among the very few favors I have asked I have solicited Mr. Brown to suffer young Phillips to remain in his small clerkship as a personal favor & also on general considerations of party expediency. Tho now Democratic in his feelings, Phillips has been in politics a neutral and I do believe that under all the circumstances his removal is both unnecessary & inexpedient. Mr. Brown has informed me & has given Phillips notice to quit on the 25th October. I take his refusal very much at heart.

Young Phillips has a wife & three children & is very poor. Dr. John Phillips his father-in-law & my personal friend asks me to approach you directly on the subject. I cannot deny him. Unless you consent to interpose, the poor fellow must go. Can you interfere with propriety? If so, I shall be most deeply obliged.

Under all circumstances, however,  
.....your sincere friend,

His Exly.

Ro. Tyler

Franklin Pierce,

President &c &c

At this time Tyler was defending his unknown authorship of a pamphlet favoring the construction of a Pacific Railroad. He and Buchanan were on the same side but Wise later opposed a Pacific railroad at government expense. Ole Virginia, unlike the lower South, would not greatly benefit by a line extending westward from New Orleans to California. The letter\*\* is typical of Tyler's idealism in contrast to the money-minded business men of that day.

Sept. 30, 1853

Washington Lane Esq.,

Editor of the Ledger

My dear Sir:

I perceive from your remarks in the "Ledger" of this morning in reference to a certain pamphlet\*\* on the subject of the Pacific Railroad that you are



opposed to such an enterprise at the present time. To this I can have no objection altho I sincerely regret that the friends of this great national work cannot have your able co-operation thro the columns of your effective journal. But you do the author of the pamphlet great wrong in considering him with a knot of speculators in New York or elsewhere, whose object is to build the road as a private corporation. The writer of the pamphlet, I am certain, has no such association but on the contrary is in favor of the construction of the great highway of the world commerce by the direct agency of the govt. in order that it shall hereafter be enjoyed as the property of the whole people and of the whole nation, and also for other reasons not necessary (to) mention here. You will thus perceive that you have done unintentional wrong to one whose sole object, however mistaken he may be in his views, has been the prosperity of the country & the glory of the Union—it being difficult to determine if this road be completed, which it will best serve, the commercial grandeur of the nation or the perpetuity of the confederacy.

Yr fr & obt svt,  
Ro. Tyler

The year 1854 saw little or no correspondence between the two men. In that time the Know Nothings swept over Pennsylvania and the North but were thoroughly thwarted by Wise in Virginia. This victory greatly enhanced his prestige not only in the state

but also in the Union and fanned the ambitious fires in his ever active mind.

Private<sup>21</sup>  
Legation of the United States  
London 28 November 1854

My dear Sir/

I have now been here more than fourteen months, & whilst I have received letters from nearly all my other intimate personal & political friends none has yet reached me from Robert Tyler. What is the matter? I should have supposed he would have been among the very first to write to me in a foreign land. Perhaps he may have supposed that as I should not again require the political services of my friends that I therefore felt but little interest in political events at home. This is far from being the case. Besides, my personal friendships are sacred; & both Miss Harriet & myself kindly & freshly remember the delightful visits of Mr & Mrs Tyler to Wheatland & hope that they may be renewed.

Well!—the storm has passed over Pennsylvania<sup>22</sup> & has prostrated the Democratic party here. They will surely rise again, Anteus-like from the earth, & that too bearing their ancient name upon their banners, stronger than ever. Their energy is irrepressible because it is inspired by principles which can never die. No secret political Society, in a country of free discussion can long remain triumphant. Least of all a Society founded upon the ostracism of our

naturalised Citizens & violating the sacred right of man to worship his God according to the dictates of his own conscience. I rejoiced to find that amidst the general wreck Judge Black had been spared.<sup>63</sup> His loss would have been a great public misfortune. I was happy also to observe that Mott had been elected<sup>64</sup> & that too by a majority of 190,000! It was well for him that Darsie was of foreign birth.<sup>65</sup>

Our friend Judge Mason<sup>66</sup> has acquitted himself nobly in the recent Soule' affair. No man could have conducted it in better taste or with sounder judgment. I gave him all the indirect assistance I could from this side of the channel.

The present war with Russia<sup>67</sup> is emphatically a war of the people of England. Public opinion demanded it from the Government. In the face of all its dangers & difficulties & although the loss of near relatives has clothed so many families in mourning, the British people seem determined to prosecute it with redoubled vigor & energy to a successful conclusion. John Bull is an obstinate & persevering old gentleman & will fight it out. He has got into a scrape in which others were far more interested than himself & has for them borne the brunt of the battle. It argues little for French & English Diplomacy, that Austria having by far the deepest interest in the Stake should remain neutral, whilst France & England are not only fighting her battle but have given her possession of the Principalities which she so ardently desires. But Austria cannot much longer remain neu-

tral; & until she becomes a party to the war I do not perceive how the oppressed people of the Continent are to be benefited. The Czar is an ugly customer. At the commencement of the war when my opinion was asked in a social party of what would be its result, I answered in the words of Scott

"Now gallant Saxon, hold thine own  
No Maiden's arm is round thine thrown  
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel  
Through bars of brass & triple steel."

I am not certain the quotation is exactly correct.

Miss Harriet as well as myself desires to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Tyler & the family. Give Toucey a kiss for me. Let me hear from you soon & believe me always to be sincerely & respectfully

your friend

Robert Tyler Esquire

James Buchanan

It might be added that the opposition in Pennsylvania also had its own division in their camp. Cameron was the most powerful of the leaders soon to be called Republican. Then there was an anti-slavery element led by Curtin and Wilmot but the Democrats did not dread their hostility as much as they did that of the high tariff Cameron men.

When Wise stumped Virginia against the Know-Nothing Movement Buchanan vigorously praised Wise's character to Robert Tyler. He sagaciously noted, however, that "nothing can be so bad that there is not some good in it, and the good in the Know-

Nothing organization is their apparent determination to put down the slavery agitation." He added that "whether sincere in this or not, it will have some good effect in the North. It will at least be an obstacle to the current of abolition."<sup>68</sup>

Wise won the election and thus became sort of a giant killer, if one could call the young Know Nothing party a giant. A letter of Wise to Robert Tyler in May, 1855 indicates that Tyler had been warning Wise to beware of Forney. Buchanan wrote Jones a letter<sup>69</sup> warmly desiring Wise's election. He was thus letting his Pennsylvania friends know where he stood with regard to the Virginian.

"Heaven grant that Wise's anticipations may prove correct, and that he may be triumphantly elected. He is now the great man of Virginia—able, energetic, and eloquent—and his friendship has bound me to him by "cords of steel." We shall not learn the result before the 11 inst. If he has been defeated, still he has cast bread upon the waters which will return to give him triumph after a few days. But I ardently hope for his election.

"I am proud of the old Democratic party."

By July 3 Buchanan was answering<sup>70</sup> a letter of Robert Tyler's, congratulating the latter on Wise's victory. Still he had admonitions, "notwithstanding our victory in Virginia and the division of the Know Nothings in their convention at Philadelphia, we must not despise the strength of our enemy, and I am glad to perceive from the term of your letter that this accords

with your own opinion. Many a good cause has been lost by over-confidence." Reports from the interior of the State were encouraging.<sup>71</sup> While Buchanan was anxious to return home he wrote that he had "dismissed the presidency" from his thoughts. He approved Robert Tyler's policy of not committing himself at so early a date for anyone, and did not commit himself as to Pierce's chances for a renomination.

On September 18th, Robert Tyler wrote Wise concerning a political meeting in Philadelphia as follows:<sup>72</sup>

Phila. Sept. 18, 55.

My dear Sir:

The meeting last night was a very large one & their very *greatest* disappointment at your not being here. In truth thousands of people came to see & hear you. It was very defective in its organization. The People came to hear you & to go to the..... of the occasion. The management was a *clique* affair. I was studiously omitted by the Committee of Arrangement altho I had more friends among the People than every other man at the seating put together. Your letter is admirable! Gov. Bigler ran away from the meeting. Mr. Dallas made it an effort & some of our most prominent young men refused to countenance it because of the management. You must know that G. Westcott is one of the most despised men in the community.

It was tame in spirit & the only real manifesta-

tion of general interest was when some fellow from the stand announced your..... The People then gathered up in one solid mass.

Yr. friend.....

Ro. Tyler

A letter from Wise to Tyler of September 23, showed that Wise was not as yet contemplating a race with Hunter for the nomination. He wrote that they had "no idea that any slave-holding Democrat can get the next or any nomination hereafter for the presidency." He would oppose a division of the South against the free soil enemy. "And this resolved," he wrote, "I mean to continue to act as if I was not thought of for any place of political preferment." He would consent to no scramble in the South for the Presidency and his friends would act with Hunter's or it would not be his fault. Evidently Tyler and others were urging him to enter the race. "Buchanan," wrote Wise, "will try to run and so hard that he cannot be of any service, resulting or direct, to any friend who might by his influence succeed if he was out of the way." Probably he referred to himself as one of the possibilities thus effected.

On October 12th Wise advised Robert Tyler to no longer attempt to promote his boom for the presidency.<sup>73</sup> "I have never," wrote the Governor, "had more than a mere hope of carrying Pennsylvania. There is too much Free-soilism in her to expect a union with the South, except upon a candidate of her

own. That was the main cause of my supporting Mr. Buchanan so heartily—it was to bind Pennsylvania to Virginia." But Wise also intimated that the North must be sound on the protection of the Constitutional rights of the South. Pierce had no chance. "Whoever has a chance must not be too rapidly pushed forward now. You must patiently wait for Mr. Buchanan to move, and give the cue to his friends. If he cannot be a candidate himself, and he cannot, I have no idea he will take part for anybody. He could insure my nomination if he would".....

Buchanan seems to have thought in November that Pierce had a chance for renomination.<sup>74</sup> He knew that by the rules of the game such a course would be in order provided it could promise success at an election. His concern in a letter, (November 9th) to his niece was that his friends in Pennsylvania who "constitute the ablest and most honest position of the Democratic Party" would take due advantage of their strategic position in the coming convention. Should they do this they should select the candidate and "*thus take care of themselves.*" At the same time the state of his health could furnish a reason for his refusal to become a candidate—but he cautioned his niece against making any statement pertaining to his health. A week later Buchanan wrote his niece exonerating Forney for coming out for Pierce, since the President had placed him at the head of the Washington Union where Forney had made a fortune, and because Buchanan had not come out as a candidate.

He intimated that Miss Lane ought to be careful in Philadelphia, saying "If I had any views to the Presidency, which I have not, I would advise you not to remain longer in Philadelphia than you can well avoid. She would meet people hostile to her own friends in Philadelphia. He expected Dallas might be put against Pierce as rival for the Pennsylvania delegations support an event "which might prove unfortunate."<sup>75</sup>

On the sixteenth of the month Buchanan penned<sup>76</sup> the following to Robert Tyler:

Legation of the United States  
London 16 November 1855

My dear Sir/

I have only time to write you a few lines by Mr. Appleton in answer to your last of the 23d Ultimo. I am sorry, truly sorry to say, that my stay in England will be necessarily prolonged: & from your patriotic feelings you will be the first to recognize this necessity, no matter what may be my personal unwillingness to remain here any longer. I cannot leave my post in the midst of a storm. My line of duty was never clearer before me. Had I done this, I should have been justly denounced by every American in Europe, & I doubt not the same result would have followed in the United States.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler & in the hope that I may meet you both ere long, I remain always

Robert Tyler Esq.

Your friend

James Buchanan

By the 12th of November Robert Tyler concluded that the Buchanan men controlled the situation in Pennsylvania, and that the Dallas men were in full retreat. He set forth these conclusions to Governor Wise at that time.

Private"

Phil. Nov. 12, 1855

My dear Sir:

This State is now certain for Mr. Buchanan. Mr. Witte and Mr. Carrigan, who were published as members of the Dallas Convention, have backed out in a card this morning. When the Carrion Crowe of party will not stoop to the scent it is a very bad sign indeed. The reason of these vestigia retrorsum on the part of these persons is that at the recent meeting of the Canal Board at Harrisburg information was obtained from all parts of the State favorable to Mr. Buchanan. It is plain that the country must take Buchanan or yourself, but nevertheless you must line towards him strongly.

Your friends here have all the right direction & independently of a few politicians, there is a remarkably kind feeling towards you. I shall write Mr. Cushing today and say to him that this State is for Mr. Buchanan without doubt or peradventure.

A person by the name of Hannings (?) from New Jersey who will be a delegate to the Cincinnati Convention has been made by me to conceive the most friendly views towards you & he will keep me advised

of New Jersey matters. He seems a straight up & down bold fellow.

Mr. Buchanan & you have the next Presidency in your hands. Act together & nothing can prevent the success of one or the other in my opinion.

The Pierce movement is dead here by confession & general avoidance.

I have just read your letter to the New York National Democrats. It is really admirable.

Your friend etc.

Hon. H. A. Wise

Ro. Tyler

Wise concurred in Tyler's opinion, and replied on the 18th.<sup>78</sup> "You are perfectly right. Our policy is to go in for Buchanan with all our might. If we can elect him, it is the best which can be done. I will support him as I did before, but I fear Virginia will not be brought up so strong for him as in 1852. If he is not nominated, he and Pennsylvania at his back can say who shall be. That's clearly our game, and the thing now is steadily to pursue it. I have been writing to our friends in Virginia to go in again for Buchanan. It is said Hunter is for Pierce."

From Buchanan's letters to Miss Lane it is evident that James Van Dyke had poured a tale of woe into her ears about Robert Tyler supporting a Wise boom for the Presidency to the neglect of Buchanan. "Mr. Van Dyke," wrote Buchanan, "does not properly appreciate Mr. Tyler. I like them both very much as well as their wives. Van Dyke is able, grateful,

energetic, and influential, and should he take care of himself, will yet win his way to a high position."<sup>79</sup> The last remarks are "political." Perhaps Miss Lane was supposed to mention her uncles' words at the proper time. If so, we have here both a warning and a "promise" which carefully avoids a commitment. Such passages are those which make Buchanan a most interesting person. At the end of November Buchanan wrote further, "Van Dyke's message is like himself. He is a kind and true hearted fellow. I am persuaded, however, he does Tyler injustice. His being for Wise was but another reason for being for myself. He had written me several letters of a desponding character. He thought the State was going all wrong,—great danger of Dallas, etc., and attributed all to my refusal to be a candidate, and not returning home at the time I had appointed. By the last steamer, however, I received a letter from him of a character altogether different....."<sup>80</sup>

Hunter's friend, Seddon, wrote him that Wise, because he at the outset supported Hunter, did not have the temerity to go directly for the nomination himself.<sup>81</sup> Hence he developed the theory that no Virginian could secure the nomination, and threw his supporters to Buchanan, with the hope of possibly strengthening himself. Floyd, Buchanan's future Secretary of War, was very hostile to Hunter at the time, for no revealed reason. Seddon thought it might be due to lack of attention or to the fact that the former Governor aspired to the place of James

Mason in the United States Senate. At the end of December Wise went up to Washington and, from what Robert Tyler wrote his father,<sup>82</sup> must have been somewhat elated by the attention paid him. He confided to Robert Tyler that neither Buchanan nor Hunter could be nominated. At that time the House was fighting over the election of a speaker. Sectionalism was more than apparent and Robert Tyler predicted the election of Banks. Robert Tyler was evidently not to be moved from Buchanan who he said was "very strong" (as possible Presidential nominee.)

At the beginning of the month Buchanan was cautioning Jones to be sure the Pennsylvania delegation was a unit in opinion so they could secure the most possible power at the right moment in nominating the candidate who appeared to them most fitted for the task. Again he cautioned against too much certainty in expecting a Democratic victory in 1856. Speaking of Wise he said,<sup>83</sup>

"Of Wise I can never speak without grateful emotions. He has been my true, able, active and efficient friend. His energy, patriotism, and moral courage cannot be excelled, and he has much more prudence than his enemies are willing to concede. I am warmly attached to the man, and should the occasion ever offer, I shall esteem it as privilege to serve him."

One wonders if the "occasion" referred to a possible nomination of Wise. Buchanan desired among the other things to have Jones remember him "most

kindly to your Democratic colleagues from Pennsylvania." While Buchanan was still refraining from any positive gesture concerning the nomination it was very evident that he fully appreciated the prestige which came to him as the leader of the "best" of Pennsylvania's Democracy. It may not have been entirely unpleasant for Wise to reflect upon the possibility of Buchanan's having to get the two thirds vote and the equally possible consequent selection of himself as a "dark horse."

A letter<sup>84</sup> from Ex-President Tyler to his son Robert in November was cordial in support of the impetuous Virginian. But it also contained some gloomy presentiments of a troublesome four years which proved to be dismally correct. Tyler would gladly support Wise but he despaired of the future. "Rely upon it," he wrote, "that the next four years will prove to be the turning point of our testing, and that it requires no ordinary man at the head of affairs to weather the storm. I even doubt whether the presidency would be desirable. He would be but a wreck in history whose administration should witness a destruction of the government. But I must here end my gloomy reflections....." and Buchanan in far-away England seems from time to time to have heard the direful whisperings of the same unseen fates who held the thread of the Union in their hands.

## Chapter II

## FOR BUCK AND BRECK

The last of January found Robert Tyler busily engaged in aligning Buchanan delegates in the Keystone.

*Confidential*<sup>1</sup>

Phila Jany 23d 1856

My dear Mr Buchanan/

I have been exerting my entire energies to induce Virginia to declare for you *primarily*, believing that such a declaration on her part would settle the question of the Presidential nomination in your favor. I shall continue my utmost efforts to that end but I fear without proper effect. Wise says he can't now carry the State for you in State Convention. He thinks that the right moment was not seized &c.

The truth is the State will be divided between Hunter & Wise or go for Wise alone. I am quite certain of one thing however that he prefers you to any other man North of Mason & Dixon's line. Pierce has no party in Virginia. He has New Hampshire, Alabama, & will in all likelihood have North & South Carolina. I do not perceive how he can possibly ob-

tain thirty additional votes & regard his re-nomination as quite out of the question.

This State will present your name with singular unanimity. It is said the Ohio men are for you & certainly it would appear that the *sense* of the general Party is distinctly in your favor. New Jersey will no doubt pronounce for you & perhaps Maine. Tennessee is uncommitted & Kentucky is for Boyd while Indiana goes for Bright & Iowa for Douglass.

The *impression* is that the Party will select you for nomination but I do wish you were at home.

No matter to what feeling you may attribute the remark—Mr Forney has done you irremediable mischief thro all the South where as a general thing he is held in perfect contempt & his fast & loose *policy* has hurt you everywhere throughout the Country. Still I do trust the *nation's appreciation* of your great experience noble services & virtuous character will lift you up, upon your own merits, above all these schemes, intriguers mistakes &c &c/and I believe such will be the case. Of all the candidates now named *I am sure* you are the only man for whom a majority, much less two thirds of a National Convention can be brought to vote.

I drop this line in the most hurried manner & trusting soon to see you here at home

I am your unalterable friend

Honble James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler



Wise gave a picture of his situation in Virginia on February eighteenth.\*

Richmond Va.

February 18th, 1856

My dear Sir.

I haven't had time before to-day to reply to yours of the 7th & 11th— You did well to nominate Mr B..... i Phila.—hold on to him until all hope of his nomination by the Cin: convention is lost.. We have counted noses here and *Hunter cannot* and I *can* get Va. Neither will be named by this states Con: on the 28th. No body will be. My friends stand in the H. Delegates 65, Hunter's 15, and 16 scattering—divided between Buch: & Pierce. If I desire it, I can get a nom: for myself—for no one else. I will not take it. My friends will be instructed to go *first* at Cin: bona fide for Buch—and then for Hunter or myself which-ever fairly this State prefers. His friends will go *first* for Pierce with same instructions; but our vote will be *a unit*—for Buch: *first* as I say. Give this out to our Simon-pures alone.

Yrs truly

Henry A. Wise

The following letter<sup>a</sup> of March contains one of the few references of Robert Tyler to John Slidell, Senator for Louisiana, a consummate political leader, who marshalled the Buchanan forces at the coming Cincinnati convention.

Philadelphia

March 17/56

My dear Sir

Enclosed I send you a letter from Mr. Slidell. You will observe what he says.

The truth is I have the greatest confidence in your skill and power because I know you are just as reflective in preparation as you are hot and emphatic in action, but I have supposed your best position was to be able to say to all outside influence I mean those hostile to Buchanan—"come now, take one or the other of us—if you don't want *me* I'll take him". Can't Virginia nominate Buchanan if she likes, and on this view of the question which I have stated with great force.

Be on your guard with *all* Pennsylvania.

Preserve Slidell's letter (of which of course say not a word) and send it back to me.

*Douglas* can hardly make himself, but he has great power to help another.

I have a wretched cold.. I have been disappointed in not having heard from you since the Convention.

Your friend always

Hon. H. A. Wise

Ro Tyler

I feel it somehow in the atmosphere that an effort will be made by Slidell to carry Buchanan's friends to *Douglas*. Watch this carefully.

In the spring of 1856 events in the Keystone moved rapidly. Pennsylvania rallied enthusiastically to her favorite son, now sixty-five years of age. State pride, love of power, and an honest regard for Buchanan prompted Democrats of all factions in the Keystone to unite, and the Harrisburg convention offered and expected the Democracy of the Union to accept the claims of her candidate who was thus placed in the field for the fourth time.

Buchanan, still in England, expressed his gratitude for the great "uprising" of the people in his own state in his behalf. He was stirred to find the Democracy of the state still true to him and to have it now in his later years cover him with the mantle of its power. All this had happened with practically no exertions on his part. Indeed, his friends had all they could do to obtain his consent to stand for a nomination. Hence the clamor for his elevation to the presidency was doubly gratifying.

In April, 1856, Buchanan arrived in New York where his friends watched with anxious eyes the nature of his reception. It left nothing to be desired, and similar evidences of good will were evinced at Philadelphia, Lancaster, and later at Baltimore. Conservators of the middle states and elsewhere held the Buchanan's well known powers of conciliation would prove of infinite aid in averting further perils that threatened the party and the Union.

Robert Tyler noted his opinion of Buchanan's

reception to Governor Wise, while Buchanan promptly praised the exertions of Virginia's governor.\*

Phila. Apr. 26 (1856)

My dear Govr

I wrote you a few lines a week or more ago enclosing an editorial from the *Pennsylvanian*. There was another in the paper of yesterday hinting at the idea of coalition. I trust Virginia is going all right to suit you.

Mr. Buchanan's reception has been very cordial and gratifying to him. He is in good spirits, about the first thing he said to me was to ask about you. At the dinner yesterday there were a number of speakers and I was called out and made (they tell me) a happy speech.

James Black of Pittsburg—do you know him, one of the Cincinnati delegates, came to see me on the day before yesterday. He wished you to write to him, and it would be well to do so. If Mr. B. should fail (by no fault of Virginia) I believe the delegation would support you, tho efforts would be made to divert it toward Cobb or some other. There is a great dislike and jealousy of the Forney clique (as they are called) by a large portion of the delegation. Black and Cobb are both in this way of feeling and so is Gov. Bigler. Jones is my proof. By the by if you can touch Black in any way do so. He is a Bigler man tho not a bad fellow. He has several friends in the delegation.

I do not know that your best policy would not be to go in for Buchanan altogether and without reserve, and endeavor to reach the succession thru his adm. Your New York letter has made a little flutter!

I shall go to Washington again next week.

Yours very sincerely

Gov. Wise

Ro Tyler

To R. Tyler

Wheatland, 7th May, '56.

My Dear Sir:

I have received your several kind letters, but to answer any letters at the present moment I sincerely regret is impossible. I do not get time even to read them all until after night or the next morning early. I have no person to assist me.

Wise is a glorious fellow, for whom I entertain the highest respect and warmest attachment. I thank you for the information about Virginia which you have communicated.

With the kindest regards of Miss Lane and myself for Mrs. Tyler, I remain always, your friend,

James Buchanan

U. S. Attorney's Office  
140 Walnut St Philadelphia  
May 14 1856

My dear Sir

I have this moment received a note from Mr. Wise in which he says "return my most friendly salu-

tations to Mr. Buchanan. All is safe and sure for him in Virginia so far the delegates stand—Wheeling, 2 Weston 2 Winchester 2 Fauquier 1 Albemarle 1 Bocock's 1 Franklin, 2 Rockingham 2—13 for Buchanan Elected: Fauquier 1 Albemarle 1 Bococks 1 Petersburg 2 Tapahannock 2—7 against Mr B elected. To be elected—for Mr Buchanan.—Against 1 in Richmond—Total 22 for Mr B to 8 against him.

This is certain and an unit vote will be cast. Our friends agree first to vote an unit vote—to cast the whole 15. Secondly to vote steadily for Buchanan until he is nominated or fails"

He has also written a strong letter to New York in your behalf to a Mass Meeting

Yr friend truly

Hon Jas Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

Phila May 16/56

My dear Sir/

I sent you a letter on yesterday (partly in Mr Vandykes handwriting) conveying to you some interesting news from Virginia—the glorious old Commonwealth! Gov. Wise's note to me relieved me from a condition of very great anxiety.

I trust & now believe that you will be nominated for the Presidency at Cincinnati.

And now one word on another subject.

From their natural proclivities towards yourself, & perhaps also from considerations of friendship to-

wards me every Irish Press in the Country with a very large aggregate Circulation were enthusiastically for your nomination. Your speech at the Lord Mayor of London dinner has given a great shock to all these People from their attributing to your language a meaning it may literally bear but which you of course never intended.

I wrote a note to the Editor (a warm friend of mine) of the New York "Citizen" stating in brief (among other things) that you merely designed to be understood as saying in effect "that it was impossible to make a Nation of slaves of Americans, Englishmen, Scotchmen or Irishmen" They had supposed you had meant to justify British Govt in India & Ireland. The Editor & I had quite a good-natured correspondence of course. Finally the note was not published for reasons I am not at liberty to give you. What I wish to suggest is that you take some opportunity (as tho' it were not done for that object) to make this matter straight before the nomination. It might be awkward to touch such a subject afterwards. I happen to be in a position from which I can see all the consequences. It will affect one way or the other over 200,000 votes. Just *casually* use some expressions your friends may seize on. I know your opinions & feelings on the subject & consequently am satisfied.

There are some few—for the most part valueless men—who are all the time insinuating or also directly claiming that you—you whose shoe latch they are not fit to tie—*belong to them*. It is a piece of intolerable

insolence. For Gods' sake if you have a whip about you strike these gad-flies, with it & slay them or drive 'em away

I must in justice say that no man (so far as I have seen) could have behaved more honorably than Govr Bigler. You are really indebted to him

Yr friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>a</sup>

From Sherwood Forest came the views of Ex-President Tyler upon Buchanan's chances in the coming nomination.

Sherwood Forest<sup>r</sup>

May 19. 1856

Dear Robert,

I was dissappointed in delivering, or more properly, repeating my lecture in Richmond in consequence of my inability to reach there by reason of an accident to the Augusta—several days elaps'd before any boat took her place—nor do I regret it since Mr. Washington's letter has appeared, which expresses, to my mind, the determination not to sell—He is perfectly right not to sell the tomb of his ancestors to any other than the State— I leave Congress out of the question, as I am clear in the opinion that that body has no right to purchase— The Ladies of the Mt. Vernon Association take a different view of Mrs. Washington's intentions and have repeated their

request to me fixing the 14. June for the Lecture—but a letter lies by me in which I indefinitely postpone the subject— A similar declension has been announced to the ladies of Lynchburg who before Mrs. W's letter appeared earnestly press'd me to repeat at that place—and now comes up an application from an agent of the New York Herald for the Manuscript for publication in that paper— I have said "when publishd the Herald shall have it"— The address contains some things which will be new to the public—and others which without being seemingly designed for the purpose, will put to flight Blair's fancies— His expose<sup>1</sup> has not even been notice'd by the southern Press so far as I have seen—

Have you seen Irvin's review of Mr. Buchanan on the slave question? It has produc'd some effect in this quarter. Irvin is the Editor of the Democratic paper at Lynchburg— I have no doubt but that the article does injustice to the present opinions of Mr. Buchanan—but it becomes his friends to notice it— Genl Pierce has many friends—and I confess, that I incline strongly to him altho' I do nothing and say nothing— It seems to me that unless the South shall definitely decide in favour of the single term as an inflexible rule, that great ingratitude will be involvd in its opposition to the President— He has certainly, on the absorbing question of the times, been as true as steel— However, I do not concern myself about these things so let my views pass for nothing— I will say however that if Pierce & Buchanan shall slay each

other, Douglass will not be powerless in Virginia— Genl. Rusk has not been spoken of— The fact is that Pierce and Buchanan aside, there is no fixed public sentiment among the Virginians or N. Carolinians. Every thing is afloat. Filmore (sic) having been nominated by the Whigs has caused my name sometimes to be mentioned—but I have neither longings, or ardent desires—so go your own way without thinking of me— What has become of my friend Stockton? Is it true as reported here that he has join'd the Know-nothings? I don't know how to credit it.

My paper is full and so adieu

J. T.

(This letter covers three pages of a letter sheet and on the 2d page is a memo.:

I skip'd this sheet without observing it—Destroy—after reading).

Robert Tyler was a sensitive individual like many people who have the capacity for poetry or imaginative writing. Unfortunately we do not have the letter of May 22 to see what troubled him at the moment. Buchanan's letter and Tyler's reply shows that he may have thought some of Buchanan's Pennsylvania supporters were not as cordial and co-operative with him as they might have been.

Wheatland, 23d May, '56

My Dear Sir:

I have received your kind note of yesterday week

and extract from Governor Wise. He is a noble fellow, to whom I have been warmly attached for many years, and I may say the same in regard to yourself, though you will admit I am no flatterer. *I fully appreciate your friendly services, and they are recorded in my heart.*

You have perhaps a little too much of the sensitiveness which belongs to genius. No man has ever intimated to me a doubt of your friendship. On the contrary, you are always spoken of with praise in my presence. It is but this morning that Forney spoke to me in strong terms of your efficient services.

I say to you now, what I would not have said to you last night, that should the "Old Dominion" stand firm, it is my opinion my friends will succeed at Cincinnati.

In haste, I remain always, your friend,  
James Buchanan"

Phila: May 24 (1856)

My dear Mr. Buchanan:

I have a note from Mr. Wise yesterday evening. He says that *without a single doubt* the Delegates stand for you 21 to 9. He gives the Districts. In Abingdon it seems Mc Mullin is elected Pierce, but anti-Hunter. The enclosed slip puts the matter of the Norfolk Delegate at rest.

He adds to me "count McMullin & certainly see to Floyd—If he be true he can lead Virginia right."

He also gives me the Programme of the fight on the Convention. That he understands & has all along understood Brights movement—That Douglass will at first withdraw. They will try Hunter & Bright at you after Pierce is killed off & then Bright is to go for Douglass who will be your most formidable opponent.

Of course I give you this for what it may be worth.

I have supposed that Hunter would be the pis aller candidate of the Coalition at *the last* moment. He also says that *you* must show strength from the start & maintain it, otherwise *some* of the Virginians may get leaky. I hate to write this but I must speak the truth. There is no fear of any defalcation tho' unless there should occur an absolute gag. Leave this to me.

I have your very kind note this morning & thank you warmly for it. I have no disposition to quarrel with any of your friends. I have acted throughout on what I have deemed a principle of self-defense: You have no idea how I have been isolated at times. Forney is a man of brilliant talents & I would not stand in the way of his potential promotion in every proper way. Van Dyke I like personally very much. It has goaded me beyond measure that any one should affect to doubt my respect & friendship & even personal affection for yourself. And yet many things have occurred to induce me to suppose that efforts were indirectly made to place me in a false position. In the State Convention an illiberality amounting to

personal insult was exhibited towards me. However I am willing that by-gones shall be by-gones, & so help me God if I could see you nominated & elected to the Presidency 'it would be a balm to any wounds-I have received from my real or fancied source or causes.

Believe me your friend

Hon: James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler<sup>10</sup>

New York<sup>11</sup>

May 26/56

My dear Sir

I went to see Mr Charles O'Connel this morning hoping to be able to prevail on him to go to Cincinnati, but was so unlucky as not to see him. He might in a certain Contingency, be of essential service were he on the ground.

Gov. Saunders<sup>12</sup> is here—& has had a long conversation with me. He declares for you without a second choice. He says that his former intimate association with the Douglass men has given him a certain power with them. He thinks Douglass will be your formidable opponent. He says that it will be necessary to expose to that portion of the Douglass men who are *anti-Pierce* the understanding between Pierce & Douglass. That he cannot approach Soule thro Slidell because they are enemies. That he cannot approach others thro Forney, because it is understood that Forney after yourself, prefers Pierce.<sup>13</sup> In other words that he ought to have some letter of credentials

from you to be placed in the hands of Glancy Jones, or some other friend for use in the emergency. Perhaps this would be well but you are the best judge.

Broadhead<sup>14</sup> is here declaring everywhere that Virginia is against you— I have seen several of the Vermont Delegates this morning—They are *really for Douglass* except one who likes Cobb. They all admitted to me at the same time, that *you* would make the best run, but it did not matter because no democrat could carry Vermont. O rare & virtuous Logic.

Your friend

Hon: James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

On May 30th, Tyler was able to telegraph Buchanan that things looked well. The Democrats had assembled at the Queen city of the West on the banks of the Ohio to "save the Union" from the Republicans and were for the last time in some years to present a united front to the foe. Slidell, whom Tyler did not seem fully to appreciate, had, according to Barlow, done his work well. How Wise's men did the pinch hitting is graphically told in Tyler's letters. The fullest account of his personal efforts was written to his father on June 13th.<sup>15</sup>

Phila. June 13th 1856

My dear Father

I have just received your letter & the name to which you allude is sustained unlike many names—by

the reality. Mr. Buchanan is nominated & he is clearly indebted to Virginia for the nomination. Mr. Wise is in truth the Warwick of the hour.

Mr. B. has written me *the warmest sort of letter*. After all I do not know what he can do for me.

I met with a great deal of notice & consideration at the Convention & your name was mentioned always with praise & admiration. My friends gave me a splendid Banquet & a Military Escort. They have also ordered a full length Portrait to be taken for one of their Halls.

I made three or four speeches while in Cincinnati—but my Banquet speech was the best. I was in the best temper possible & altogether pleased the Company & myself—the latter a difficult thing to do. There was a little buzz at one time about the probability in certain circumstances, of my name being suggested for the Vice-Presidency—(think of that!) but I laughed it off when mentioned to me as a good Joke.

If I were a rich man & the Union does not “slide” I really believe I might be something yet! But as it is I float helplessly in the morass of doubt & debt.

Your letter to the Black man (Butler) is exciting warm interest. If we could only avoid senatorial flagellation & have occasionally a letter like this of yours the benefit would be incalculable. What a precious thing it is to have a little common sense.

Henry A Wise was indisputably shown to be at Cincinnati the great Popular favorite. The Politicians are against him North & South—the People

adore him. So far as his fate is concerned the question is which will beat the people or Politicians? Whenever his name was pronounced in the Popular meetings it was received with a great roar.

John is doing very well—that is he is always & altogether sober. His military antagonist Small is in prison for Contempt. John whippd him badly too. He called John a coward & got a terrible thrashing for his pains.

I have paid the New York draft.

My love to Julia & the children & respects to all friends

Ro: Tyler

His Exclly

John Tyler

Tyler's political work continuously brought him into contact with Irish journalists. The following letter explains in a somewhat florid manner the seeming paradox of the alliance of the Irish Democracy with the plantation regime.

(Thursday)<sup>16</sup>

Milwaukee, June 5th, 1856

Mr. Robert Tyler

My dear friend,

I heard incidently, through a friend, that you are in Cincinnati/ Glad am I to know that you have visited Cincinnati, and that you have seen Kenefer and



Halpin and the "Robert Emmett Club." I heard that you were to deliver a lecture there last Friday night.

I know that the men of Cincinnati will appreciate the honor you bestow upon them. They know that in honoring you that they honor themselves and those glorious principles which have been your guiding star through life.

The Democratic Convention is now sitting in Cincinnati and I hope that Governor *Wise* of Virginia will receive the nomination for President. I would prefer *Wise*. Give me a Virginian. This is Truth—not flattery because you are one. Virginia is the "Mother of States, and of Statesmen." Her sons are true Heroes—noble, wholesouled and Republican. They have good hearts as well as heads. And in Southerners, generally, there are those qualities of high-toned manhood and chivalry, which the Holland worshippers of Puritan New England know nothing.

I don't know what to say of Buchanan. Will he receive the nomination? I know that he is your warm personal friend and admirer. I know that he is a good democrat but I am afraid a little touched with worship for Great Britain and her vaunted power and influence. I may be wrong. I would be sorry to have any misconception of any friend of yours. His speech made in London lately remains unexplained, so far as I know. I suspect that he will not receive the nomination. I know Mr. Buchanan if nominated—will be elected. I know that he will run well. He has a deep hold on the affections of the real men of

this Republic. But I think that in the present position of affairs—foreign or domestic, that we want a Southern man.—No more Northern men for us now, they care too little for down-trodden and oppressed nations. Northern men have no sympathy with oppressed nations, and care little for the downfall of republican principles—they do not reflect the great heart of the American people. Northern men truckle and tie with great despotic nations—like England and France; and do not recognize with promptitude young struggling Republics. We are sick of those mean, heartless white-livered Yankees—and they are generally steeped in Abolition schemes—seeking to exalt the Negro and debase the Irishman—because profitable,—seeking to give the right to vote to the Negro, and take it from the Irishman—seeking to make the Negro wallow in the blood of their masters and to dissolve this Union of the most false and incendiary doctrines seeking to murder Irishman at the polls—and from the polls—and have done so—and have cast their wives and children into their burning hovels or dripping bayonets. Mr. Prentice the heartless Connecticut abolitionist did, or caused to be done in Louisville, Ky.—where he is the editor of a villainous half-suppressed abolition sheet. Whilst the Temples of that religion to which I do not subscribe—but to which the Majority of my fellow-countrymen do subscribe—have been polluted by ruffian hordes of Yankee abolitionists. I know Nothings; from Maine to Kentucky—and the priests insulted—tarred and feathered in

New England, ridden on a rail. Yet no state government has bared its arm to punish a single outrage. The blood of the innocent still cries to heaven un-avenged. But if the least thing be done to the Negro—if a woman from Kentucky be only restored to her master—who clothes and feeds and protects her. The whole land rings with the “hue and cry”, by the damned infernal abolition press—and loud cries of “blood and destruction” are heard—woes predicted for the South. Dissolution of the Union threatened—forgetting the wise and just and mild injunction of St. Peter from that Bible which they curse and praise by turns. “*Be not a busy-body in other men’s matters.*” 1st Pet. 4 chap. ver 15. Whilst doing all these, some of this faction are engaged in the port of Boston—or some other port of New England fitting out slave ships privately for the coast of the Africa New England has followed in the footsteps of Old England—raises the puritanical howl about “religion” and “civilization”—and in the broad feature of hypocrisy reflect to the life the *original*. Whilst the Bible is in one hand, the bayonet is hid with the other hand to stab you to the heart. Whilst they “preach” peace from their puritanical pulpits—they mean assassination. Whilst they talk of freedom for the black man, they are forging chains to bring him from his original home in Africa—to sell him in Brazil or Cuba, or wherever they can get a market. Whilst New England ministers talk of themselves as being “Ministers of the Prince of Peace”—they hand down from a protestant

pulpit—a Sharp’s Rifle—“warranted to shoot” 20 times in 80 seconds—to shed the blood of Republicans and freemen of the South and West on the plains of Kansas—for attempting to live under what the Constitution of the United States guarantees and secures. Their crocodile tears are all for the well fed Negro—whom a kind providence has given to the care of the white man—whose intellect is necessary to guide and control the Negro and to keep him from falling back into original barbarism when he can dance around the fires that roast his victim taken in war, and drink his blood from bowls made from their skulls. The Yankee abolitionists would make buttons out of the bones of their fathers and swear that they were “ivory” in selling them. They would sell the honor of their mothers for money. They would reverse the order of providence and nature, by blood and fire give what they call “Freedom to the Blacks”—*whose life is connected with the soil in the southern states.* (Not so in their “free state”.) and who cannot in the eye of the law be turned out to die by the roadside.—Whilst the beautiful white woman and child and man—with forms that mock the sculptor’s art and with intellects capable to comprehend the Universe—and of a *race* which has shed glory, or beauty, and blessings over the globe. “*These whose lives are not connected with the soil*” have been turned out—in the most fertile island in the world—and whose granaries were loaded with corn provisions—under the *benign* British government by millions to *die* by the roadside—and who

are still daily turned out to die at the will or whim of the landlord—in the face of the “*religion*” and “*civilization*,” of “New England” and “old England.” Oh/ there are no tears for these, but there are curses—from those who know that they are more than equals in form of feature and intellect and devotedness to principle—and *jealousy* fires even demonical cruelty. There are no Sharp’s rifles handed down by New England Ministers from protestant pulpits in their cause. No tears to shed over the delirious mother who in the insanity of a consuming famine has made her stomach the tomb of her infant. Great God/—No blood to be shed in their cause. No pitying abolitionists hand extended to broken, crushed, honest, republic and loyal hearts—who have managed from out the desolation created by men worse than demons—to help them when cast on our shores—on these shores. No Sir.—But there are the sneer and the gibe, and the *false accusation* and the damning *insult*—and the robber—*grip on their last penny*—by those very men who would spill your hearts best blood to free the Negro—and who would apply the bayonet and the torch if these poor republicans—no “foreigners”—as they call them—if they dare assert that they have the right to self-government. If they seek to claim what is asserted by the Constitution of the United States—and by that of every state—to be their sovereign and *inherent* right—by all that law declares, all that *Nature stamps* and makes sacred. Yes Sir. Irishmen will be shot down by Know Nothings and Abolitionists

if they even lay claim to what these same Abolitionists are seeking through blood, fire, and treason, to get for the thick skulled-black African. For this cause of the black man these cruel and bloody factions would sever this glorious Union and steep every noble American and Southern heart in a sea of blood///—And if Irishmen. If S. Lumsden—one of the Irish—a man who never had a bill presented to him a second time—whose bright unsullied brow has been known for 21 years in Cincinnati who has contributed to her wealth of fame.—If this Citizen 1000 miles from the sea board with some of his devoted and pure minded countrymen—meet to discuss and act in a lawful manner on the principles of “self-government” and seek to spread their blessings—they are seized like dogs—refused bail,—though ten times the amount be offered.—thrown into a prison, laughed at—sneered at—and scorned by the whole tribe of damned abolitionists and traitors from New England and old England—called “renegades” and “vagabonds”—by the whole of the New England, and old England press—the balance of the press bought or silenced, that would cry for “justice” and “fair play” in our behalf—our principles mis-stated—our motives impugned—and the filth of their polluted souls attempted to be cast upon us.

For proof of this—see Cinti, Daily Times, Gazette, Commercial, Columbian, and Enquirer, and all the principal N. Y. papers of the “Albion” of N. Y.—and telegraphic reports,—of last January.

New England and her children wherever scattered—as a general thing give all the aid and comfort they can to the common robber and murderer of the world—old England. And have now all but openly joined hands to divide and destroy this glorious union—and to raise the blacks of the South to their hands in the blood of white men—women and children.

The South may yet wish for the aid of those “100,000” Irish-American bayonets, which Samuel Lumsden would have a vinegar (?) bill glistening in a summers sunrise. He never will have in the wildest dreams of a just and a holy ambition—the opportunity to muster this number of bayonets guided by true hearts. But this he promises that every bayonet that he can muster, will be for the Union, and the South and their undoubted rights—if the fight do come—and against every New England and old England foe—“white cravat” or otherwise who are making a hell of earth—and who would turn to a desert the fairest, and greatest, and grandest portion of God’s creation. Himself and his countrymen will be found—if they ever have been found—on the side of truth and justice. Their right arms will be used to put down traitors—fanatical traitors—religious traitors—long faced sleek hypocritical traitors—educated ruffians and murderers in the pulpit, or out of it. Men who have publically read the Constitution of the United States and then burnt it, and with curses stamped the ashes of the paper under their feet in

Eastern cities. Irish citizens will put these down, or perish in the fight.

These fratricides and their thousand generations will be in dust and consigned to damnation—the damnation of the people at least—before a single glorious principle the constitution of the United States contains shall be erased.

*THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES*/// Sacred is this instrument. It is born of God.—and wants no prayers to protect or preserve it—It will protect itself. Its Righteousness is inherent. And in this instrument only is the sovereignty of the individual true man; fully declared. The Constitution of the United States is as Eternal as man’s nature.—*Write me soon*

Ever your devoted and affectionate friend,

Saml Lumsden.

“Copy of letter to Detroit; Extract.”

‘Letter received from there today sort of opposed to, old Buck ‘As to the Nov. election the question with Irishmen is simply whether they will vote for those who would hang draw and quarter and who are all the same whether they call themselves Whig Freesoil Republican American or Knownothing, or for the only party which has unswervingly and steadfastly granted and maintained all the rights and privileges which foreigners are allowed to possess and participate in when naturalized and which has sealed its fealty to

Irish citizens by selecting for its standard bearer James Buchanan the son of a poor Irish tailor—I should have felt some hesitation about endorsing him fully in consequence of his farewell speech on leaving England had I not had it fully and entirely explained to me direct from himself as being a mere empty compliment passed on leaving the country under the anticipation that war would soon occur; he felt embarrassed as to what to say and thought it most polite before the world to say something as civil as possible.

It would take more than that speech to make *me* vote against a Democratic nominee or to place a weapon in the hand of a Knownothing, by my vote, to knock out my own brains etc.

Extra additional—No, standing on the loftiest peak of the snowcapped (in cold weather) mountains which overhang in gloomy majesty the crowded thoroughfares of the metropolis of Bristol, Old Buck points to its mineral springs as the fittest emblems of his own ferruginous predilections and of the spontaneous out gushings of the great will of the mighty and unterrified Democracy Hoorah Hoorah Hoor—a—h.’

Buchanan’s speech at the Lord Mayor’s dinner in London was, of course, a good will testimonial for peace between England and America. As this letter shows he had indicated that you could not make slaves in a political sense of any English speaking race. The Irish were, in the opinion of some of the editors, not included by Buchanan. This omission made something of a problem for Tyler in keeping the Irish

in line. His attitude as head of the Irish Emigrant Aid Society and as a Democratic politician, was, I think, very praise worthy.

Philadelphia”

June 16, 1856

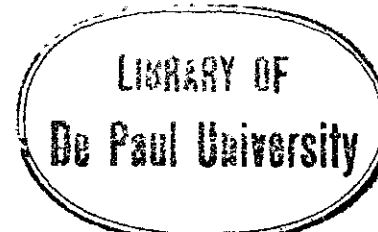
My dear Doctor:—

I do not see much prospect of my visiting New York just now. Perhaps you had better pay a flying visit to the city of “brotherly love.”

What you have said in regard to the position of Mr. Buchanan is no doubt correct in this that he never intended to convey the idea in the remotest degree that the British govt had not been a tyrannical govt both in Ireland and India. He meant to say no more than this—that he did not believe you could make slaves in a political sense of any race speaking the English tongue. They might be subjugated for a time but would always struggle to be free. This was the idea.

But my dear friend we must not mix the I. E. A. Association with the current politics of the times. It has nothing to do with Democrats or any other *mere* politician as members of the Supreme Directory.

Directing we do not know any particular line of politics in this country as regard either men or platform. I am of course as Robert Tyler, a *Democrat* profoundly interested in the success of Buchanan and of course there can be no objection to have him put



right on the record in a proper way. But I will never agree to turn the Society of which we are members into a political machine for myself or any other man.

Therefore I pray you to be very cautious in what you write to the clubs.

Come on here to see me.

I have not heard from Mr. McClenhan for some time past. Why he should be lukewarm in his friendship for me is perfectly inexplicable. I hardly think it can be so, for I entertain a great regard for him.

Yr faithfully.

Dr. J. J. McGowan

Ro Tyler

Tyler reported to Wise on the 9th.<sup>18</sup> While he chose to hail Wise as the "Warwick of the hour" the title in my opinion, if it must be given, would possibly go to Slidell who organized the Buchanan men at Cincinnati on the eve of the convention. Nevertheless but for Wise's delegates Buchanan might have lost the nomination.

Phil. June 9 56

My dear Gov.

I returned home on yesterday afternoon. Nat. Tyler will give you a full account of all occurrences.

Bright took his position easily with Buchanan for two reasons.

1<sup>st</sup> he preferred B. to either Douglas or Pierce.  
2<sup>nd</sup> he intended if Va. could have been induced by any bribe or pressure first

to agree to support Hunter, then to leave Buchanan with a *killing* effect. Making the contest then between Hunter for pres. and himself for Vice Pres. against Douglas and Rusk or Quitman.

Douglas friends used every art to console and deliver Va. into Hunter's arms as the only means of beating Buchanan believing in that event he could beat anybody else. Thus Virginia was the battlefield and a change of *two* Districts would have at any time defeated Buchanan.

Virginia had the credit of making the nomination and you are the hero of the fight. The Pennsylvanians except a certain small . . . Bigler clique are disposed to diefy you.

I shall write again in a day or two and enclose an extract from Carrigan's speech, a popular orator (?) of a good deal of power, in reference to yourself before the great Democratic Meeting here. You should have heard the roar on roar of the People. Some of the Virginians opposed to you said you seemed to be more popular out of the state of Va. than in it.

Your friend ever

Hon. Henry A. Wise

Ro. Tyler

On June 13, 1856, Governor Wise delivered an extensive speech<sup>19</sup> at Richmond. In large type it would have made a voluminous pamphlet. It was circulated in the north to win votes for Fremont. Naturally Wise made the most of Virginia's part in nominating Pennsylvania's favorite son. The Republicans

were quick to use such statements as "especially faithful on the subject of slavery" as headlines changing "especially" to "always" in a heading. Buchanan was sound on the Kansas-Nebraska bill. According to Wise this excluded the idea of Squatter Sovereignty, for, "His friends of Pennsylvania, in nominating him at Harrisburg, had excluded the idea of squatter sovereignty, adopted the principle of non-intervention by congress to permit or exclude slavery, and of state equality in the territories, leaving the rights of all to be guarded by the Constitution; and immediately upon his arrival home, he adopted their nomination of him, placed on the platform." The fact that Pennsylvania was entitled to recognition for her long, patient, and loyal devotion to the party was clearly stressed. Wise put the situation in plain language.

"She alone of all the Middle and Northeastern States stood firm for Democracy; she alone of the Northern and non-slaveholding states of largest federal strength and size remains true and reliable; again she offered her son, who had been thrice sacrificed by non-democratic States; was he to be again defeated—she again to be rejected? Ah! We might have nominated without Pennsylvania; but could we have elected without her united voice of twenty-eight votes?—without the only certain first-class State left to Democracy and the South in the North?" The possibilities of a war with England were considered. Wise declared that "nothing could be more disastrous to the whole country, and especially to our Southern

section of it than a war with England at this crisis." Wise hastened to show that he did not fear a war because he did not desire one. He noted possible complications in Central America. He stressed the time it would take for the United States to become prepared to wage war successfully and the fear that in the event of war injured interest might force a dishonorable peace. Even slavery's emancipation might be included if the Black Republicans had a chance to make one. James Buchanan was known in England as conciliatory and conservative. His election would secure continued peaceful relations between the two countries. In concluding Wise praised the work of the Virginia delegation, who had steadily supported Buchanan's nomination and warned them against a suggestion "whispered" by Fillmore men "to let Southern men in minorities and Northern men in Republican forces. Wise declared such a suggestion "monstrous patriotism, and more monstrous admission." He held that the Fillmore men would get but few men in the North and that their ticket could but serve to prevent unity at the South. The South, he predicted, would unite on the Cincinnati platform.

Wise's very favorable attitude toward Douglas was very noticeable in the first part of his speech. At one point he said, "Mr. Buchanan was older, if not a better soldier, than Mr. Douglas, who is young enough to live to run another day. Let him go on, for of late years he has made his rising greatness to shine, and Virginia, at least, in due season, will delight to

honor him with her vote as she does now with her approval."

Wise was erratic and had his moods. But a study of his activities during this period finds him constantly looking Northward for his alliances. With the exceptions of the Tylers he does not seem to have found much favor with the States Rights group. At this period he was championing the idea of Southern rights looking to the Union for protection. Politically he was trying to accomplish this purpose by seeking alliances with Northern leaders who were tolerant of Southern institutions and as yet popular with Northern voters. He would not readily believe that Douglas stood for squatter sovereignty as he could find little to support that interpretation of the Democratic platform in Virginia. It is evident that he was trying to follow the demands of his state and at the same time keep on good terms with Douglas. His own Presidential ambitions were subject to an ebb and flow based on his prospects at any one time. And when he could not nominate himself the role of Warwick strongly appealed to him. There was not only the presidency but the Vice-Presidency to contemplate. It is to be noted that while Wise looked Northward Buchanan looked steadfastly Southward for support to carry on their respective purposes. And while Wise carried the banner of Buchanan, a friend of Hunter was lamenting on how utterly Bright and Douglas had disappointed "our expectations and how false and hollow were their professions."<sup>20</sup>

On the 20th Wise in high and mighty eloquence wrote a letter to the Philadelphia Democracy declining an invitation to be with them on the Fourth of July following.<sup>21</sup>

Richmond, Va., June 20, 1856.

Gentlemen:—In reply to your kind invitation of the 17th inst., to meet the Democracy of the city of Philadelphia, at 9 o'clock on the 4th of July, in Independence Square, I inform you that it will be my duty, that day, to obey a late resolve of the Virginia Legislature, to see a bronze statue of General George Washington placed on its pedestal, at Lexington, in Rockbridge, Va., the site of her Military Institute. This, I am sure, will excuse my absence from the celebration at Independence Square. How hallowed are those names:—how sacred those shrines around which a patriotic people may rally: You at Independence Hall, I at the pedestal of Washington's statue, our hearts, I hope, will throb with the same impulse, our minds will be filled with the same sentiments, our knees will bend in the same devotion:—to defend the inheritance transmitted to us—to love our country, our whole country—to do our duties, like men and patriots, under the Constitution and the Laws and to leave the rest to God.' The Isms of Evil are fusing, good men have only to unite to save the sacred things they would destroy. Let us unite them, heart and mind, with all our strength—to put down Bigotry and Intolerance without which we cannot have a pure Church; all ex-



clusiveness, whether in the shape of discrimination against naturalized citizens or in any other shape, without doing which we cannot have equal and free citizenship—all Infidelity and Antichrist, without doing which we cannot have a Republic which must stand upon the morality of the Christian code—all Higher Law, without doing which we cannot have a Constitution to protect us, a Union for our palladium of liberty, or a Country unsoiled by the blood of civil war.' Let Pennsylvania and Virginia stand by each other, as they did in the night of Revolution, and as they have usually done ever since, and nothing shall shake their power to defend, preserve and perpetuate all we hold dear.

I am very truly yours, HENRY A WISE.  
To Daniel Dougherty, James Ross Snowden, &s, &c.

Less than a week later he opened a brisk fire or controversy with Buchanan over the important problem of squatter sovereignty. Buchanan was evidently hurt and annoyed. His reply was an able indication of his defense of the rights of the South. His stand on "squatter sovereignty" was clear and showed no sympathy for either Douglas or the Emigrant Aid Society. Buchanan's letter is I believe one of the most important in the collection when one takes into consideration what was to follow in 1857-1858. It shows conclusively that the President had made up his mind on the subject probably even before this time. It shows that he did not believe that the first few set-

tlers who reached a territory could exclude others from it by preventing them from conveying their property into the territory. As Buchanan printed in his book in 1866 the Cincinnati platform did not say when slavery was to be decided upon in a territory.

Richmond Va.<sup>22</sup>

June 26th 1856

My dear Sir:

I regret that your views of propriety don't allow you to accept the invitation to visit us privately, and to meet your Virginia friends at our delightful watering place. But you are, perhaps, right, and I am glad that your health needs not the Hygeia of our mountains or salt water. I would like very much to slip up to see you for a day or two; for I have much to say:—among other things that there is a single phrase in your letter of acceptance which seems to signify that you concede the power to the people in a Territory; whilst in the territorial state; to prohibit slavery—in other words, which expresses squatter sovereignty, doctrine. I know this construction must take the phrase from its context and its connexion with your distinct pledge not to add to or take from the platform a single plank. Indeed, you expressly say in the same letter that you defer the popular power of intervention to the status when they become a Sovereign State. But, nevertheless, there is an old Calhoun clique here who are, in an undertow reaction against the popular tide, holding back and saying that they

will not open their mouths in the canvass. This may injure us somewhat, and it is easily remedied. They are striking at me as well as you, in Virginia, and already slyly hinting that I as well as you, am intending to betray the South on the Kansas doctrine. Now, can't you authorize me, or take some other mode, to say that in your letter of acceptance you meant simply to adopt the resolves of the Cint. Convention, as understood by their friends? You know I am not easily disturbed by apprehensions, and I opine you I would not trouble you with this but for good reasons and not without consultation with some of your best friends. I don't mean to say it is *essential*, but I am confident it is politic to stop every murmur just at this moment. We want to carry Virginia by 20,000. I think we will and think you will not lose a slaveholding state. But you will lose even this state if you are suspected even of squatter sovereignty sentiments.

I am glad you approve of my ratification speech. I tried to avoid doing you harm. I am afraid of the North—not of Pennsylvania. But sectionalism is dreadfully enraged and is apt to fuse all its elements of mischief in this contest. Please accept our reciprocation of your good, kind wishes and

believe me yrs truly

Hon: James Buchanan

Henry A. Wise

Wheatland, near Lancaster<sup>23</sup>

28 June 1856

My dear Sir,

I have received your favor of the 26th instant, and hasten to answer it. I hope you may find time "to slip up" to see me, as it is quite impossible that I should now leave home.

In writing my letter of acceptance, after mature deliberation, I resolved to stand upon the Democratic platform, erected at Cincinnati and that I should make no further explanations. That platform which is clear and explicit, in regard to the slavery question, met and still meets my cordial approbation. I accepted it and can see nothing in my letter about which an honest cavil can be made. If I begin now to explain there would be no end to explanation: and you better than any other man can ridicule the idea that there is anything in my letter that is contradictory to the platform or in favor of "squatter sovereignty."

For many years of my life, I was engaged, in advocating southern rights in the Senate and afterwards sustaining them on the stump, in conversation, and in the newspapers before the people of Pennsylvania. I never had a secret thought upon this subject which might not have been published; and yet I have been distrusted by some persons in the South. A crisis has now arrived in the affairs of the Republic seriously endangering the Union. In fifteen states there can be no Fremont electoral ticket. The sectional party has been distinctly formed; and the battle of union or

disunion must be fought by the Democratic party of the free states, after having heartily adopted the principles endorsed by the South on the subject of slavery. It promises to be a fierce struggle. I have embarked in it with all my heart and shall give a direction to it so far as this may be proper for a man to my situation. In the name of Heaven: when everything is at stake upon the issue, is this a time for any Southern man to be captious and criticize my language, as he would criticise an indictment on a special demurrer; though I do not believe that Lord Coke<sup>24</sup> himself, were he alive, could find a flaw in it. We shall, I firmly believe, triumph in the conflict and save the Union; but use your great influence to prevent any fire upon us from the rear. We shall have a more bitter fight in front than we have ever yet encountered.

It amazes me to find gentlemen in the South who are ready and willing, in the present crisis to raise the Knownothing flag. Do they not perceive that if they could give two or three of the Southern States to Filmore and Donelson this would throw the election into the House where the black Republicans would triumph.

I feel my deep responsibility in this momentous struggle. I am placed in the front without having had any inclination for this position and I desire with unshaken firmness and prudence to do my duty and prove myself equal to the emergency. Pray strengthen my arms in the South, for the support of the Union and the constitution and do not arrest us while we are

dealing blows upon your enemies and our enemies by stopping us to inquire the construction, which we may place upon this or that resolution of the platform which so far as the slavery question is concerned, appears to me to be quite clear and satisfactory. Ever sincerely and gratefully your friend.

(Signed) James Buchanan.

Hon: Henry A. Wise

Phil.<sup>25</sup> June 30/56

My dear Gov:

Since I last wrote to you I have been ill & for the most part confined to the House. As a matter of course I have not visited Mr. Buchanan as I had ..... *but I suspect he has written to you before this.*

You must understand that there are a great many men both in Pa. and Va. & elsewhere who are very anxious to underrate your influence exerted in the consummation of Mr. Buchanan's nomination. The thing is too plain, however, for any misapprehension.

If you have a corrected copy of your Richmond Ratification Speech let me have it.

Now looking to the future I wish you to be *deliberate & guarded*—jealously so—in anything you might say & write & especially in your present & future relations with Mr. Buchanan. Your Richmond speech is excellent & I have heard it highly complimented.

Judge Douglas will be caught most likely in the "Squatter Sovereignty" trap.<sup>26</sup> The South & the

North differ as widely as the Poles about its true meaning. They ignored this subject at Cincinnati. But if ever issue be taken as to whether a *territorial Legislature* can exclude the slave holder with his property from a territory, there will be the devil to pay in the Democratic Party.

Without leaving any Southern ground of principle, strike at all Southern political metaphysics & consolidate Northern sentiment. I do not mean the vagabonds parents of the infidel abolition schools, but the agricultural, commercial & manufacturing classes of Peoples—sturdy ..... loving people.

Yr. friend etc.

Gov. H. A. Wise.

Ro. Tyler.

As soon as I can take half an hour with Old Buck I shall be able to tell you something.

A letter from Wise to Tyler of July 6th<sup>27</sup> showed him in much the same frame of mind as his letter of the 26th of June to Buchanan. He had by that time received Buchanan's answer. He was certain that if a doubt existed in Virginia about Squatter Sovereignty, "he can't carry this state." The Pennsylvania papers had better be decided on that but "Mr. B. will not, perhaps ought not to, respond to enquiry. Let him rest on his first letter." He wrote Tyler that he, Wise, was more deliberate and guarded than he had been given credit for. "Douglas," he continued, "is a concealed advocate of squatter sovereignty." He

had published a speech in the July number of the *Southern Literary Messenger*.

The month of July was hot in more ways than one. This is plainly evident in the letters of ex-President Tyler. On July 14 to John S. Cunningham, he wrote that he expected the Democrats to win decisively. On the 21st he wrote David Gardiner, "We are here comparatively cool", and did not believe the "combined forces" could make an "impression upon the popular vote. Feeling was running high in old Virginia." "It is quite sensibly felt by all," wrote the ex-President, "that the success of the Black Republicans would be the knell of the Union." "I look however, to no such result of the election." Some days later he was worried over the Fillmore men who wished to circulate the idea and hope that the election would go to the house. He was fearful less plots should be put afloat which might injure Buchanan but added, "I do not speak more openly because my fears may all vanish with the return of another day."

A letter of July 10th from Beverly Tucker<sup>28</sup> to Buchanan was perhaps calculated to aid the impression Wise wished to make on Buchanan. He also stated that a formidable effort was being made to "convict" Buchanan of squatter sovereignty. Mason and Hunter were not Buchanan's friends. The South were all for Buchanan. Van Buren's letter had done no harm. Fremont's letter would be an aid to the Democrats.

In a letter of July, Robert Tyler evidently in an-

swer to an admonition of Buchanan disclaimed war on Forney although it would be hard to call his attitude peaceful.

My dear Sir/

Phila July 18/56

It has occurrd to me that I had as well say to you that I have nothing to do, either directly or indirectly, with any warfare in faultfinding with Mr. Forney in Virginia or elsewhere. On the contrary I have no inclination to object to a proper appreciation on your part (and certainly *you* are the judge of this!) of his friendship & services. Nevertheless I must add that I regard it as highly impolitic that too many of us old Buchanan men should either really or apparently crowd about your person at this time, or with the Party Organization. Such a course is calculated to excite & *does* excite envy Jealousy & fears as to the Future, with hundreds and thousands and hence for one, altho I know of no one whose society is more delightful to me, I have studiously abstained from any public display of familiarity or intercourse with you. But I shall leave others to go their own way without interference or comment. You well know that my advice & assistance (for what they are worth) are always at your service.

The enemy are making a desperate effort here, by bribes to the Fillmoreites (?) offering the legislative ticket & the Row) for a consolidation of forces on the *State ticket*.

Truly yr friend

Hon. James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

On the same day Tyler wrote Wise of Virginia as follows:<sup>20</sup>

Phil July 18/56

My dear Gov:

Enclosed is an Editorial of the German Democrat of this city on your speech at Lexington. It is written by Edward G. Webb who was editor of the Pennsylvania. I wish you would take some opportunity to write to him or suppose you send him a document.

I have seen Mr. Buchanan. He spoke of you in the most friendly way. *He distinctly declares himself opposed to Squatter Sovereignty.* He says that if elected *President* he intends being the President. I explained to him the course of events at Cincinnati. He had been previously doubtful (?) He said that I had presented to him a new set of ideas and this with incredulity (?) I realized that which I set forth was perfectly true. The men immediately about him altho they dare not make open war are hostile both to you and to me. I trust, however, & believe he will do what is right in all respects.

I think (*entre nous*) that he will call (if anyone from this State) *Judge J. S. Black* to his cabinet.

You will also find enclosed a letter of mine written to a Committee of Stark Co. Ohio, with an editorial from the "Citizen" (New York). It was originally published (not by name) in the Canton Paper. Will you have it published in a Richmond paper & credited to the "Citizen" with so much of the editorial

as may be proper? The "Citizen" editor, Mr. McClenhan, preferred & *prefers* you to anyone for the Presidency.

It is as hot as Toffet. Your Ratification Speech was largely noticed at the time in the Pennsylvanian Theophilus Fiske is the Editor now.

The opposition of all shades are making a desperate effort to rally together. If so we shall have a close vote in this State. What do the Old Whigs in Virginia mean?

They are idiots or madmen or traitors to encourage any division South at this time. The destinies of the country are in the scale.

Yr. friend

Hon. Henry A. Wise

Ro. Tyler

The statement in regards to Buchanan's position on Squatter Sovereignty shows that he had no intention of allowing Northern squatters and immigrants solely to determine the future status of Kansas. A Lancaster writer<sup>31</sup> of the 70's held that Buchanan had written to a friend in that town in 1854 opposing the further disturbing of the old compromise.

Tyler's influence with the foreign born is well indicated in the following letter:

Phil.<sup>32</sup> July 25/56

My dear Gov:

I sent to you a letter containing a notice published in the German paper from "The Democrat"

(12,000 subscribers). We shall carry this State & New Jersey certainly, & I think New York. If the Fillmore men make electoral tickets (while Mr. Fillmore can under no circumstances carry a Northern or N. Western State) he will help us to carry pluralities in nearly all of them.

I addressed on Saturday night the largest meeting ever held in Phoenixville (?) in this State. Hundreds came from all parts of Chester Co. to meet me. (naturalized citizens generally—I mean those *especially* anxious to see *me*) & at a compliment I paid you there was immense vociferation.

If we beat the nigger worshippers *bad* in this election the *contest in 1860 will be on the Know Nothing Heresies.*<sup>33</sup> I say always to all these new Americans that in such an event Gov. H. A. Wise is the man. You saved the party once and you are entitled to lead the fight.

Your friend,

Ro. Tyler

Philadelphia<sup>34</sup>

Aug 4/56

My dear Gov:

You have misapprehended my language, for I did not intend to convey to you the idea that Mr. Buchanan entertained any distrust of you. He could not have used any such language in my presence without the warmest sort of a reply. Not at all. He did not take the same view of the position of Mr. Bright of Indiana in the convention that I did, and he evidently

supposed it was my object (unintentionally perhaps) to depreciate Indiana for the benefit of Virginia. I am attached to Mr. Buchanan and have every reason to believe he respects and likes me personally and politically, but I should resent forthwith the slightest injustice to you.

Very truly yr. friend

Hon. H. A. Wise

Ro. Tyler

The following portion of a letter is one of a group which Robert Tyler received from his co-workers in the Irish Repeal Association:

New York<sup>ss</sup> Aug. 8th 1856.

Dear Sir:

I have a letter today from Dr. McCracken suggesting the immediate adoption of new signs & passwords to be forwarded to him as soon as possible. I would suggest the following for your approval—

1st sign, Rub the left hand across the mouth three times

Answer Rub chin twice with right hand

1st question. Shall we soon succeed;

1st Ans. We will in the fall;

2d question. What fall:

2d Ans. The fall of tyranny.

If you approve this inform me promptly so that I can apprise Dr. McCracken.

I am and have been very sick lately: the filthy state of this city has placed me fairly hors de combat,

were it not for the glorious news from Kentucky, Missouri, Iowa, N. Carolina, Arkansas, etc which has in part served to revlve me. I would soon be "down among the dead men." The returns from these States have made the Knownothing niggerworshippers here shake in their shoes: Some of the Fillmore men say that if they see that Fillmore has no chance they will vote for Buchanan.

The course of the Herald<sup>ss</sup> is able but infernally unprincipled and throughly ungentlemanly. I feel confident that a most outrageous article against Buch about a week since has injured its receipts as it has alluded to it several times since in a half apologetic manner, justifying itself by stating that the Dem. papers have also abused Fremont. The principle aim of the Herald seems to be to sophisticate and falsify the issues pending, in an air of candor & frankness beautiful to behold: practically to create division at the South.—I regret to see that the ..... (The remainder of the letter has not been found)

A letter of August 15th of Governor Wise to Robert Tyler indicated that the Whigs would not vote in large numbers for Fillmore but for Buchanan. Wise went so far as to declare that Whigs who had not voted for him in 1855 would now support the Democratic ticket. He thought that Buchanan would carry the State by over twenty thousand—twice his own majority a year previous.

The South would not submit to a sectional election,<sup>ss</sup> if a free soiler of Black Republican candidate

was victorious. The South was unanimous. The people disliked and distrusted the North more than the politicians. Wise was anxious lest the Union should be broken. "I tell you," he declared, "the country was never in such danger." Such letters were private and the feeling genuine because Wise did not have to camouflage for Tyler's benefit. "For the Union's sake keep Pennsylvania right in the track all the time," he requested Tyler. As the state elections in Pennsylvania drew near, the conflict became more hectic. Robert Tyler, as had been previously noted, was contemplating the possibilities of a Democratic defeat, to be followed by the eventual organization of a Southern Republic in twelve or more states.

On the 17th Buchanan wrote a letter to "a citizen of California,"<sup>38</sup> in which he favored Federal aid in building a transcontinental railroad under the war powers of the constitution. He had sensed the need of a railroad since he had had to contemplate a possible war with England in 1845. Then with Pennsylvania somewhat doubtful he had need of all the states he could claim. But Virginia cared less for transcontinental railroads than for the doctrine of Jefferson. Wise was to complain as soon as the campaign was over. Buchanan intimated in a letter to Jones at a latter date that the letter was intended to aid the situation in California and cause no dissension in political circles at Washington.

In August John Tyler Jr. turned his pen to some political letters<sup>39</sup> which were published in Buchanan's

loyal organ the Pennsylvanian (Philadelphia). He claimed that "every concession to the spirit of union and harmony" on slavery matters had come from the South not the North, that every act of practical of philanthropy had come from the same source, that continual aggression had characterized the non-slave holding North to the point where the South was ready to separate rather than grant further concessions. The South being an agricultural region could then assume a powerful defensive position and make new alliances. Great Britain would ally herself with the agricultural South and crush the commerce and manufactures of the North. It was the true policy of Pennsylvania to stand by the rights of the South while the Union endured. Should secession become a fact she should thereupon ally herself with that section.

In further support of his statement that the South had been the conceding section since the formation of the Union, Tyler cited the surrender of the Northwestern claims by Virginia which had been followed by like renunciations of the Carolinas and Georgia of lands farther south. He contrasted the use of the three fifths rule in electing southern congressmen with the counting of all negroes and aliens for the same purpose at the North. Then the South had given her right secured by local law and treaty to hold slaves north of 36° 30'. Texas also at the time of annexation handed over a part of herself "larger than New York" to appease "political dissensions . . . originating with the North." In the compromise of 1850 the South was



practically denied entrance into a region for which she had spent much blood and treasure in the preceding war. For this sacrifice she had received "the empty words of a fugitive slave law" as compensation.

Besides dedicating the Northwest Territory to freedom when slavery had already in fact existed there, the South, excepting South Carolina desired the immediate suppression of the slave trade in 1788. Due largely to the slave trading interests of New England the trade was not outlawed until 1808. Moreover Virginians including Marshall, Madison, John Tyler and others had founded the colonization society and the colony of Liberia. The great Clay had been the second national president of the organization.

Quoting the figures from a work by Reverend Doctor Stiles, Tyler held that 250,000 slaves had been manumitted by private persons in the South since 1789. Adding the price of these slaves plus the amounts contributed to the colonization society the amount would equal a contribution of two hundred fifty millions to the cause of freedom. This immense sum came from unselfish people who lost thereby, in contrast to the money spent by the government of England upon the freeing of the West Indies, an act which Tyler claimed had political motives and economic hopes. As for the work of missionaries, Tyler could point to 264,000 slave members of the Methodist and Baptist churches in the South not to mention other protestant sects. These were converts from heathen faiths and compared very favorably with gains from

other non-christian peoples. In concluding his claims for southern philanthropy Tyler<sup>10</sup> drew a picture of the social benefits of the plantation regime as contrasted with the wage earning regions of the World.

"I might enlarge upon the great additional philanthropic fact connected with the subject of the vast social and mental improvement of the negro slave of the Southern States, since his first introduction there by old England and New England, but I fear to impose too much upon you. When landed in this country, the African captive belonged to the most degraded heathen and barbarian tribes upon the face of the globe. His descendants are now far removed from the universal debasement of his progenitors. Changes for the better have marked the history of negro slavery from its commencement to the present hour. Not only has the slave been redeemed from barbarism to civilization, and from heathenism to christianity, but from being in his social condition, a blood thirsty and predatory animal, living by the butchery he was eternally committing upon his fellows, he has been rendered an orderly member of society, humane to his fellows, and of vast benefit to the family of man. The laws of the Southern States in reference to the negro slave, are more benign than any code of laws in reference to a subject class, ever framed among men; and the customs of the dominant class exact from him less labor, and bestow upon him more care than the customs of any dominant class in Europe exact and bestow upon its so-called "free white laborers." Everywhere else

in the world the laboring classes have to provide themselves with houses, lands, clothing, food, fuel and medical attendance, and have also to take care of their aged, infirm and adolescent. If one is too old for work, or too young for work in other societies, and has no family or friend who can, and will provide for him out of his daily acquired pittance, he necessarily has to appeal to charity and the alms house for the means to sustain life. The daily receipts of the day laborer, even in the best regulated communities elsewhere, but scantily supply the means of paying rent, and providing requisite food, raiment, fuel and medical attendance for himself and family. Sickness or accident often subject him to the mercy of his landlord, and render him destitute of the necessities of life. In the Southern States the negro slave is always bountifully supplied with all necessities of life, never suffers from the want of medical attendance, and his aged and infirm and adolescent amply provided for, and reared in comfort, cultivates the land whose products return to himself rent free; and never, from the hour of his birth to the day of his death, passes a day without being secure in his tenement and home. Even his family, though liable to be sold, are nevertheless more united in time and space, than the families of the slaveholders themselves, and incomparably more so than the families of the North that rarely "abide in one story," which fact is too easy of demonstration to admit of argument.

In conclusion, the census of 1850 exhibits the

statistics showing less blindness, deafness, lunacy and suffering among the negro slaves of the south than among any other four million of laborers in the universe, with regard to whom statistics have been made; and to this fact our enemies can answer nothing.

The third position I assumed in our Convention I will consider in my next.

Yours, very respectfully,

JOHN TYLER, Jr.

The struggle in September was furious. Both sides poured funds and speakers into Pennsylvania. Tyler and Wise saw the possibilities of secession looming ahead.

Philadelphia<sup>41</sup>

September 12/56

*Private and confidential*

My dear Governor:

We are fighting with power and desperation but may be overpowered. If La Porte—on the Union ticket, be beat ..... we shall carry the State for Mr. Buchanan in November. But the Dog star rages and madness rules the hour. Should Fremont succeed the Southern States must at once meet in Convention and adopt a new government. There is nothing else left to secure your future safety. The Fremont party profess to intend to rule the South—to provincialize it, to make you a *tributary* people. It must and will be so,

and the Union will be transformed a burden, a disgrace, a curse! *Your action* will make civil war here in the North. Here in Pennsylvania and in New York; you will find no difficulty in at once establishing a Southern Republic of 12 or more states (all will go in, if not at once, eventually) here in the North will be a country of divided opinion, danger and difficulties.

Still we may defeat these infidels, atheists, and rascals in a great insanity of Northern sectionalists in all shapes, impelled by the spirit of the d——d. Massachusetts yankee. Go to work steadily and be prepared.

Yr. friend ever,

Ro. Tyler

Hon. H. A. Wise

Robert Tyler evidently wrote a letter to his father somewhat similar to the one which he wrote Wise on possible secession. Ex-President Tyler was more cool and cautious. He would not believe Fremont could be elected until his election was a fact. His letter indicated a strong anti-Buchanan sentiment about Richmond led by Botts, who had declared for "Fremont or the devil in preference to Buchanan." Plainly the state was not united. Even among Democrats, a large minority "were entirely indisposed to any action." Tyler hardly knew what to counsel. While he thought it would highly inexpedient to await the inauguration of Fremont in case he were elected, there were many who would desire to do so. He favored a concentrated

movement by the South which "would control the fate of the country and preserve the Constitution."

Wise on October 9th concurred with Robert Tyler's views that the Fremont group would be masters of both masters and slaves, "they would laugh at the honest, earnest Abolition fanatics, and themselves turn slave traders. I can see that, and it begins to raise the query in every mind here, hadn't we better take Banks at his word and in time, and 'let the Union slide?'"

Botts had no party in Richmond, Wise assured Tyler. Buchanan would carry the state by 30,000. One third of the 60,00 who would vote for Fillmore, would at least hurrah for the election of Fremont. But in that case Wise further assured Tyler that he could arm and equip 50,000 men the next morning, ready for a revolution. "The difficulty is in holding thousands back," and "the spirit is almost irresistible."

It is interesting to note that, despite all the writings of Wise and Beverly Tucker about the hostility of Hunter to Buchanan<sup>43</sup>, the Virginia Senator took the stump for the Pennsylvania candidate and delivered an address in his behalf at Poughkeepsie, New York in mid-October. He was warmly congratulated by several of his friends on his work and the prominent papers gave it considerable attention.

The Pennsylvania state elections produced feverish excitement.<sup>44</sup> Had the Democrats failed to carry the Pennsylvania state elections, it might have led to a successful fusion by the anti-Buchanan forces in Illinois, Indiana and New Jersey. The result of the Na-

tional election in such a course of events might have kept Buchanan from the White House.

The Democratic victory in Pennsylvania in October was the political barometer. Robert Tyler's letter was echoed by many others as one of Buchanan's supporters.

Phila<sup>45</sup> October 15 1856

My dear Sir

I congratulate you most warmly on the result in the State. I think I can address you now as the future President of the U States. It is needless to dwell on the real pleasure it affords me when I venture to sympathise with your own feelings in being thus triumphantly sustained by your own State. This election too is in its result the *great act* of modern History. It will enable—if properly improved—the conservative men of the Country to save its peace and to preserve the Union. The Southern States, however, have been seriously alarmed & most thoroughly aroused & it will require all your approved Statemanship to smooth the storm of angry feeling & renew the sunshine of the old friendly relations, between the North & South.

Believe me my dear Mr Buchanan that I most cordially congratulate you on the now certain prospect of your elevation to the first office in the Republic & the world, & I beg you to present my kind & respectful compliments to Miss Lane. No doubt Mrs. Tyler would desire her kindest remembrances if she knew I

was writing both to yourself & Miss Harriet.

Yr friend ever

Ro. Tyler

Hon James Buchanan

The course of events were beginning to convince Governor Wise that he was a man of destiny! "I am flattering myself," he wrote,<sup>46</sup> "It is well for me to be Governor of Virginia just at this time. To think my race last year and success saved the Democracy; then the nomination of Buchanan, and now the Union, by creating the apprehension that I would act in resentment and resistance to the Black Republican as well as the Dark Lantern Knight. After the election just try whether the Pennsylvanian will acknowledge as much. . . . ." It will be noticed in letters already given and later that John Tyler, Jr. was especially apt in giving encouragement to Wise regarding his "mission."

By the later part of the month Virginians of both factions were more than pleased at the news that Indiana and Ohio had supported the Democrats in local elections. In consequence of their brightening prospects for November, the prestige of Wise received added luster and John Tyler felt constrained to caution his impetuous friend as to his behavior toward writing delegations. He wrote<sup>47</sup>

"There are quite a variety of things as to which I must commune with you. In the first place, I have reason to know that a set of prying knaves will visit you

from time to time, under the guise of friendship, particularly from Pennsylvania, and those of this place who are Pennsylvanians, for the purpose of taking advantage of your courtesy and frankness, to do you mischief. Those of us at the North who understand these kind of tricksters,—and their name is Legion and pass under all disguises,—*draw them out and never give them our thoughts—we let them do all the talking and all the writing.* It has become a necessity, because of the number and fashion of these rascals, for a public man who aspires to lofty eminence, only to reveal himself on great occasions, and before the country. *He only makes himself known by his public attitude,* like the renowned Pericles of old. Need I say more on this Head? These political serpents are mostly, at this time, of the Forney school and clique.”

The remainder of the letter was ferocious attack on Forney, coupled with a suggestion for his banishment.

“Now as to Forney. If Mr. Buchanan yields to his influence he will lose Pennsylvania in six months after the 4th March, and his administration will prove a failure. I have *good* reasons to know that Forney sold to Pierce all the Buchanan influence he could command, and then was guilty of a double treachery through perfidy to Pierce, after he discovered that in despite of his exertions to secure the nomination of Mr. Pierce, Buchanan would prove successfull. *He is as vile a knave as ever walk'd.* If Buchanan suffers him to be about him, rely upon it, better men and

stronger men will stand neutral and let disaster follow. Fortunately the friends of Mr. Buchanan who have been consistent in their advocacy of his claims to the Presidency, have proof of the perfidy of Forney and hope, for the sake of honesty and the country that Mr. Buchanan will see the necessity of sending the villain *out of the country* by bestowing upon him an honorable banishment. *I cannot too strongly urge this point upon your attention and the attention of the South.* You are directly interested in the matter. He can never be made your friend, and the friendship of such a man is worse than his enmity, even though the first could be had. Now Forney fears that Mr. Buchanan will banish him from the country, and he has gone to work to force his nomination and election to the U. S. Senate, of possible, so that from that position he may force Mr. Buchanan to yield to his influence. *He should be defeated in this scheme and banished.* The South should demand his banishment and listen to nothing else. Let me assure you that we lost in Pennsylvania in the recent election, not less than twenty-thousand votes solely through the fact that he was upon the Central and State Committees.

*The New York Herald attacked the party unceasingly through his name!!* He is a mass of moral and political putrescence.

The position of one or two other men in Pennsylvania I want you to understand. Clancy Jones is full of vanity and ambition. He has some strength. He has some good points. He aspires to the Senate also, as

well as to the Cabinet, failing in that, and failing in both would like St. James. John Cadwallader who has more character and more brains than Jones, would like the Senate or the Attorney Generalship. Brodhead would like to remain in the Senate. Forney hoped to arrange these matters between the several parties so as to slip into the Senate himself. He will play the game skilfully but *I tell you he should be defeated and reduced to banishment.*

Will any of the men mentioned suit you and your future? I think not. Is there any man in Pennsylvania that would suit your fortunes? I think there is and that man is Robert Tyler. He has more character, more political sagacity, more political influence with the People, and more statesmanship than all the rest combined: He aspires to nothing *just now*. I do not know that he would, just now, seek the situation. I do not believe that any but one consideration on . . . would induce him to play *tail* to any man by going to his cabinet. *He has a future of his own* to which he is marching with an unflattering step, and he would not willingly hazard himself with the fate of undetermined administration. Cabinets are oftentimes than otherwise the tombs of politicians. But one consideration might control his policy in this respect, and that is the completion of that line of policy he initiated six years ago in Pennsylvania, in connection with the name of Mr. Buchanan;—*I mean the policy of first establishing and then legitimating the power of the Government, in the two great conservative states of Pennsylvania and*

*Virginia, as the only means of preserving the Peace, union and prosperity of the country. If he could contribute more to this end by being in the Senate, or in the Cabinet, than by being outside, he might be induced, I think, to take either place. The Senate would be decidedly the most preferable in this view. To carry out this policy to its present successful issue, has required on his part great exertion and the exercise of much self-abnegation. He had first to indoctrinate the entire mind of Pennsylvania with healthy political and constitutional sentiments and principles. There was not a man (we may hardly except Buchanan) who was sound in principle before 1850 in Pennsylvania. To do this effectively he has had to deliver, time and again, in all directions in the state, . . . constitutional and political arguments, and yet . . . all publications above his name, so that other speakers and writers might have the opportunity of repeating his conceptions and arguments as their own. In addition to this he had to bring the State of Pa. up to Buchanan. In 1850, 4/5ths of the politicians and all the effective press of the party in the state were for Cass. The "Pennsylvanian" with a limited circulation of only 5000, oppressed with debt, and barely able to live from day to day, alone stood for Buchanan. On the other hand the "Times" with a circulation of 25,000, and the "Bulletin" with 20,000 Circulation were for Cass. Such was the relative strength of the two men when Robert commenced his time of action upon the policy indicated. It was an easy matter for*

him to have insured the success of Cass, but he then saw as clearly as he now sees it, that a President from Michigan would be no better than a President from New Hampshire has proved, to calm the billows of abolitionism and wrest the country from civil war. Cass and himself had been on good terms for he supported Cass in 1848, and for the same reason. Buchanan and himself had not been on good terms. Personal considerations had nothing to do with him in the matter. He broke ground for Buchanan on a lofty and noble policy. The "Times" attacked him furiously, against him, by styling him the "Warwick" of Philadelphia. In one month he crush'd the "Times" and drove the opposition into the "Bulletin"—into factious opposition—out of the Party—and finally into the arms of knownothingism. He concentrated influence upon the "Pennsylvanian", extended its circulation, tore down the flag of Cass everywhere in the state, and instituted that of Buchanan. He brought together the whole of the Catholic vote in support of Buchanan by taking Campbell as Judge of the Supreme Court. The opposition to the nomination of Campbell, at first, consisted of the entire Bar and whole press of Philadelphia, for he had no independent strength. But all were forced as if by destiny, into his support, or else immolated, or driven out. And although Campbell was not elected before the people, yet, *it was best for the policy adopted*, because it served to concentrate more effectually, the Catholics. To prevent reaction among them, Robert instantly in a letter addressed to

Bigler, resigned his own claims to the office of states attorney, & insisted that it should be conferred on Campbell. In this way Pennsylvania was brought up to the standard of Buchanan and has been kept there. You will remember that at Baltimore in 1852 Robert never voted for any other man than Buchanan and voted for him on the very last ballot. He has stood to the policy he advocated through Mr. Buchanan, ever since. He will stand by the same policy hereafter, for the election of Buchanan does not complete—hardly secures its fulfillment. He alone in the present canvass, concomitantly with his advocacy of Buchanan, has had the sagacity in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware *to prepare for 1860*. This point, *associated as it is so intimately with yourself*, he has in the most masterly manner, and with unsurpassed skill, pres'd home everywhere in those three states. *I want you to come to know him at his true value, and to you he is invaluable. If he could be made to occupy, just now, a prominent national position (WEATHER HE WILL OR NO), he would be irresistible in his future action*. Consider well of this. I write to you the dictates of my judgment, not of my feelings. I too can be above feeling and in policy as cold as marble. I write frankly as it is my duty to do if I write at all. And in conclusion I would say after the manner of Themistocles to Lycidas, *before you burn this letter, read it*.

Yours always truly

John Tyler, Jr.

Philadelphia\*\*

Nov. 4, 1856

Private

My dear Gov

The election is now going forward and with indication of our success. I presume Mr. Buchanan will be elected President without doubt.

In my last letter, I informed you that Jones (J. G.) had prepared a short editorial for the Pennsylvanian of doubly deserved compliment to yourself. What was my surprise and indignation to find that they published the article as a "communication" in small type on the fourth page. I at once (on my route to Gettysburg, where I was engaged to speak) came from Bristol to Philadelphia to see Mr. Fiske. I had an interview with him, and they made it all out a *mistake*. I then said he must correct the mistake and he promised to do so, editorially. Then next morning I went on my way to Adam's County, and on my return examined my back papers (Pennsylvanian) and I saw there was no correction made. They have since positively refused to publish the notice from the Enquirer, endorsed by the Union, complimentary to me.

Now I wish you to proceed with exceeding caution, but I fear the immediate coterie (The Forney gang), so knavish here about the person of Mr. Buchanan are inveterately opposed to you. I wish no unnecessary quarrel or fight, and this opposition will amount to nothing should Mr. Buchanan prove faithful to you and I cannot imagine any man proving so

recreant to all honor as a manifestation of coldness or indifference would be on his part.

I have written to him asking him to let me know when after the 8th of Nov., he would like to receive a visit from you at Wheatland, as free from public discussion as possible.

I have chosen to wish to see whether he will respond and how. The insolence of these People about the Pennsylvanian newspaper is only surpassed by their vulgar ingratitude. They hate me simply for my success in their cause, and now I really believe they hate me more on your account.

Well, we will see how this conflict terminates . . . When they beat me, I'll surrender . . . but I think they will lose.

I believe it to be extremely necessary that you should see Mr. Buchanan at the earliest moment.

Yr. friend ever

Ro. Tyler

Hon. H. A. Wise

Factionalism is seldom if ever absent from political parties. Even in the hour of victory the following letter shows the bitterness that was just beneath the surface:

Philadelphia\*\*

November 5, 1856

Wednesday

My dear Governor:

Thank God for a *small majority* for our Presi-



dent! We will just elect him and that's all, by the vote of the South. Already your enemies here of a certain faction heretofore spoken of under the supposition of a *large majority north*, had determined upon your sacrifice if it could be wrought. They had excluded you and your friends most carefully from their press—the "Pennsylvanian" at their head. Now they are in your power and spare them not—*spare them not*. They would betray their Fathers and their God for lucre or lust. New York, Ohio and New England with Maryland and Michigan and Iowa are against us.

Truly yours

John Tyler, Jr.

Governor Wise

November 7, 1856  
Philadelphia

My dear Governor:

The election has terminated most fortunately. A larger vote from the north for Mr. Buchanan would have proved disastrous to the administration. The Forney clique would have succeeded, I think, in driving off all honest men. As it is they have so spread their nets as almost to enmesh Mr. Buchanan. Unless their trammels are removed and they be driven into "outer darkness" I see no chance of a successful issue and the securing of the peace of the country. Their secret animosity to Southern men is extraordinary. They would confine Mr. Buchanan to themselves without regard to the country. They would have place and

'corrupt influence at every hazard and all sacrifice—narrow-minded, heartless! unpatriotic! mere tricksters! petty intriguers! What more could be expected of them? I enclose you and editorial of the "Pennsylvanian" of this morning, in order that you can see how John W. Forney can praise himself, and how the cat hops. The article from the Enquirer and Union concerning my brother was discussed in this "Central Committee" and it was resolved there to make war upon Robert in order to beat down your friends here if possible. I have such good reason for this that I assert it boldly. The Committee clique dictated to the editor of the Pennsylvanian that he should not copy the compliment from the Enquirer. Today the committee compliment themselves. They consist of Forney, Vandyke, Rice, Vaux, Cassiday, Martin, Westcott, Lee, and their plan to kill you off and bring up Douglass, Hunter or Cobb for the succession. I see enough to be convinced that a fight can't well be avoided. They should be put under the heel for a viler and more contemptible set in point of integrity does not exist on Earth.

Yours truly,

John Tyler, Jr.

Hon. Henry A. Wise

When the smoke of the election had somewhat cleared, it was plain that, although Buchanan's Southern-Pennsylvania coalition had been successful, the North had, to a large extent, drifted from the fold.

Indiana, Illinois, Delaware, and New Jersey, as well as Pennsylvania, were still Democratic. But New England, New York, and the rest of the Northwest had gone Republican. It was an excellent showing for so young a party. So far as John Tyler, Jr. was concerned, the fight for the next Democratic nomination had begun before Buchanan's election was hardly established. The first fruits of victory were evidently filled with the holes of discontent.

### Chapter III

#### FIRST FRUITS OF VICTORY

The question as to who was to have the most influence with Buchanan was the absorbing topic in the months which intervened between his election and his inauguration. Wise was evidently willing to have Robert Tyler in the cabinet, but he, of course, was not a native of Pennsylvania, and by many conservatives, could have been considered a stranger in their midst despite his services to the cause. On November 27th Tyler wrote<sup>a</sup> Wise on the subject.

Philadelphia

Nov. 27/56

Private

My dear Sir

From the contents of your letter received on yesterday I infer that my good brother John has been urging upon you the propriety and policy of suggesting my name to Mr. Buchanan for high office. John is perfectly devoted to you and to me. He thinks you have *no* equal and that I know few superiors. I desire to say to you that he has written without any knowledge or concurrence on my part directly or indirectly.

The truth is I would not think of accepting a place in Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet. I am wanting in the specific information and talents for the only two cabinet positions of any value, and I regard the others as mere clerkships. You will understand from this that I commend your course warmly in refusing Mr. Buchanan's offer, and the conduct of the "Enquirer" considered as your organ as accurately correct under the circumstances. Mr. Buchanan offers you a seat in the cabinet *knowing* that you could not and would not accept it. But if my conception is right, declines permitting you to designate your Representative from Virginia. This is quasi-kind, but I do not consider it either generous or just. I am firmly convinced *that he owes you more than he can well repay*. Therefore it was proper on your return home that the "Enquirer" should propose that the South should give Mr. Buchanan's administration a fair trial and throw no obstacles in his path, and then that you should fold your arms and await his action. This is right, just and politic and leaves a large balance too in your favor.

I shall carefully preserve my own freedom and not obtrude my advice on Mr. Buchanan, but if he asks my opinions he shall have it fully and faithfully. I am only anxious to promote your interests. Do not suppose that I am not in the habit of treasuring my friendships, but you are the only man in political life (not of my family) I really love. If J. Clancy Jones suits your views he will remain? Mr. Buchanan is a very wise man and, with an aspect of great simplicity, he is

is 'as cunning as a . . . of old. You must be looking to the future—bear and forbear a great deal but care for your own honor and for Southern rights *to keep yourself well guarded*.

Yr. friend,

Ro. Tyler

Hon. H. A. Wise

Now another cloud appear in the horizon. Old Virginia seemed much upset at Buchanan's "California letter"<sup>3</sup> in which he had sanctioned the idea of a Pacific Railroad. Worse still, Wise had publicly opposed the construction of such a road by Federal aid. Now the man whom he had made President had publicly sanctioned an opposite course. He lost no time in making known his disapproval of his friend's attitude. In a letter concerned to a considerable extent with cabinet appointments he railed against the project, conjured up the shadows of the Yazoo frauds, and protested such a broad construction of Federal power. Evidently Buchanan's answer was not to his satisfaction because he replied with a longer and equally vehement discussion of the subject on the 30th. The letter<sup>4</sup> is as follows:

Richmond va. Novr. 30th 1856

My dear sir: ,

I may be wearing out your patience, and wasting my words with you, but what is in me must be *out* or I will not be content with myself. I tell you however

you may regard yourself, the state of Virginia will not regard you as others do on the Constitutional question of internal improvements by the Genl. Govt., if a Pacific railroad is to be made a part of your policy, though it be confined to the territorial property and be limited by the possessed war power. Strictly scrutinized it is at last and best but Internal Improvement power, exerted in piping times of peace, under the "General Welfare" doctrine of preparing in peace for war. Under that chapter every power from A to Z may be exerted anywhere. This is our faith and from it we can't be coaxed or argued, it is too late in the day for Virginia to change. To build the Pea Patch requires a State's consent to precedent cession, for purpose of fort or arsenal expressed in the Constitution. To put the fort at Pea Patch or San Francisco too is to take a figure or analogy in a State or from a State like which has already caused misconception of your Pacific R. R. letter. To relieve you from this I have taken the liberty to read a part of your letter showing that your meaning is from "State Line to State line". May I not go farther and assure more than a few private friends that you confine yourself to the territories? There has never been a single road of any kind built by the general Government in the territories, in the view whether of that of the Cinti. convention or yourself, much less a railroad, with incidents attached to it as magnified and important as those belonging to a great corporation, a Bank for example or any other sort. No, no, my dear Sir, don't underscore that for me. The

Quo modo is now everything, and that is open to you for reconciliation and harmony; but that even won't save you from committal to that doctrine.

I had supposed your sentiments were known too. You didn't conceal them, and in 1853 you didn't go so far as did Messrs. Davis and Guthrie at Philadelphia. You admitted the road to be a good thing etc. but you didn't commit yourself to its construction by the general Government. They did and sorely did Mr. Pierce repent him of it. It killed him in Virginia. Mr. Inge's speech hurt you so much that it like to have driven the Virginia delegation from you, and he so meant it for his stage and he was voting against you, whilst Virginia was standing firm. Had Penna. gone with Mr. Inge of California your nomination was lost for Virginia would have withdrawn from you instantly. Penna. and Virginia voted against the resolution. And the vote cannot be appealed to by you, for you say, now you don't stand upon the convention grounds, but that you cautiously abstain from referring to the road "in a political and coml. point of view" as the Cinti. Con. had done. But, suppose you went the length of Guthrie and Davis, suppose your sentiments were well known, and suppose the convention hoped its resolution by 205 to 87 in your sense and not in a different sense; still, I tell you that I here and all your friends supposed and pledged that you wouldn't set up your individual sentiments on that question or any other, but would be governed by the *party platform of principles*. Your letter of acceptance con-

firmed this. You were no longer James Buchanan. You ignored your individuality and individual opinions, whatever they were in 1852 or ever since, and you expressly assumed a representative character of party and pledged yourself not to add to or take from the platform of the party—not the resolutions of the majority of the convention—but the platform of the party a single plank. You would raise no new issues. Yet, after Virginia had stood by you, after Penna. led her to believe confidingly that you would stand on the platform with her, with them, Penna. and Va., in a suspicious moment you took the Pacific plank from the resolutions and tacked it on to the platform. Enclosed I send you the Journal of the Virginia convention. Sorry denial was resorted to by your enemies. You did not need California, yet there was a moment when her vote might be supposed to decide the election. Tell me why you let the pendant (?) prevail, and who it was that had this plank added to the platform? I trust Virginia and Pennsylvania will remain united as they were in Cinti. for you devotedly, and against the Pacific railroad without compromise.<sup>5</sup> Can those two things be?

I don't expect ever to have to form a cabinet. If I do, it shall be a positive one. It couldn't be a unit in support of Cinti. platform and Cinti. resolutions. The two cannot act harmoniously together. I know perfectly whom to recommend for Virginia, if I know what policy he is to promote—platform or resolutions. If you stick to the platform, I will have plenty of sug-

gestion to make; if to the resolutions you can find better counsellors if not better friends than I. I am willing to make all allowances, but if the Yazoo clique are to come into power, I will be responsible no farther. I am responsible for your nomination and election but I won't be for your administration if Cobb and Bright<sup>6</sup> and Forney and Corcoran<sup>7</sup> and R. J. Walker and Slidell are to checkmate me in every move and turn me against myself. You may smile at this and say you yourself will be responsible, and if you do, I say—Well!—We'll see. I know that clique may much admire my Virginia canvass and my keeping Virginia steadfast for you; but they don't admire me, because I wouldn't be very pacific with them. Flatly, I protest against that whole set and their ends and aims, and I mean to fight them from start to finish, for they are after plunder and they know I am opposed to their schemes. Bennett cannot affect you one way or the other, but these men may. Four years hence you may have reason to say, "I had one friend who had nothing to ask for himself, nothing to fear, and who warned me that there were such things as an administration dying before inauguration." Now this all may seem harsh and strange, but it is required as truthful and honest. Not all the offices on earth could cause me to withhold it from you. I must be true to myself. I have no right to say more.

Very truly yr. friend

Henry A. Wise

Hon: James Buchanan

Buchanan however, had no intention of either losing Wise or retracting his letter. He answered the governor promptly:<sup>8</sup>

Wheatland, 2 December, 1856

My Dear Sir:

I have just received and carefully perused your favor of the 30th ultimo. I shall not discuss with you the power of Congress to make appropriations or the construction of a military road through our own territorial property, without which it is impossible to perform our own constitutional duty of defending one of the sovereign states of the Union from foreign invasion. This power, in my estimation, is necessarily and essentially embraced and involved in the warmaking power, is as much and as clearly a part of it as the erection of a fortification. Either in my Inaugural or my first Message, I shall take occasion to explain my views upon this subject, and I trust they will not prove wholly unacceptable either to old Virginia or yourself.

Against one charge or inference in your letter I must ever protest; and that is that I deceived anybody on this subject. In my remarks at Philadelphia, I expressly assumed the ground that Congress possesses the power to make appropriations for the construction of a Pacific Railroad. I have not these remarks before me; but I speak from the report of them extensively republished in the California papers, as well as from my own recollection. I am against all jobs and unnecessary expenditures of public money, and desire to

accomplish the object in the most conciliatory and economical manner possible, but without a good road of some kind, we are in no condition to go to war with England or France, no matter what may be the provocation or necessity.

I am and ever shall be deeply and gratefully

Since I commenced this letter, which has been frequently interrupted, I have reason to believe from an entirely disinterested and even casual source, that the first named gentlemen in your list, to say the least, is disposed to do you anything but injustice.

In reply to a similar letter of Wise at a later date, Buchanan wrote:

"Sensible of the obligations I owe both to Virginia and yourself for my nomination; and not the less so, because I can say from the heart that since 1852 I have felt no solicitude to become president. You have been my friend "faithful and true to me", since our first acquaintance, and I have been and expect to be as faithfully your friend. I never enjoyed a visit from any man more in my life than I did your recent visit; and when we parted I little dreamt that in so brief a space you would predict, for such is clearly the import of your letter, that my administration might probably be destroyed before its inauguration. I had confidently believed, and still ardently hope, that it may have your powerful support. You will of course act as your judgment may dictate in relation to the Pacific Railroad. This will give me no offence. This road, however important for natural defence, is but a small

matter compared with the great conservative Democratic principles immediately involved in the late election on which the Constitution and Union depend. These with the blessing and aid of Divine Providence, I shall carry into execution without fear, favor or affection. In this course I know I shall have your active, vigorous, and energetic support.

You say you will not be for my administration if Cobb and Bright and Forney & Corcoran & R. J. Walker & Slidell are to checkmate you in every move and turn you against yourself. Why anticipate? Do you in your heart believe that if any one of these gentlemen should be a member of my Cabinet I would suffer him to checkmate my best friend? Or have you so little confidence in my nerve as to imagine I should submit to such injustice? Your course is as plain as the high road to Lancaster. All you have to do is to exert your commanding abilities and great moral energy against sectional parties and in favor of the preservation of the Union. Make yourself the leading champion of the Constitution and the Union, upon the terms of the Kansas Nebraska law, equally honorable to the North and the South, and nothing can retard your advancement. But you may say, I have written a scorching letter to Buchanan, and what business has he to turn around and give me advice? Well, be it so.

My Cabinet, whoever may compose it, shall never do you injustice. You are the only person with whom I have yet seriously conversed as to its forma-

tion, and none of the individuals to whom you have alluded, has ever had the least intimation of my intentions in regard to it. I am still at a loss for a secretary of state to please myself, and until appointment is fixed in my own mind, I cannot fairly begin the work of Cabinet-making.

Now, my dear Sir, I wish you to recall to your memory, if you can, the terms of your last letter, and I think you will come to the conclusion that, between friend and friend, it is a little too severe for comfort.

From your friend

as ever

James Buchanan

Mr. Henry A. Wise\*

Since Wise had publicly committed himself on the California railroad as early as July he may have thought he could not take Buchanan's "no" for a final answer. So he wrote again:<sup>10</sup>

Richmond, Va.

December 5th, 1856

My dear Sir:

My last letter may have led you to make the mistake that it was my intention to declare war against you and your administration before it begins its policy or its existence. So far from it, my sincere & earnest motive was to prevent war between you and me.\* My efforts have been to avert hostile movements from this quarter,—The press has done you full justice,

abstained from crying objections to the Pacific letter further than I would have done, and claimed for you a fair trial. Public sentiment is still warm for you, though its fire was dampened not a little. And the State electors have met and unanimously cast their votes for you, without any out-spoken expression of murmuring, though the letter was unanimously lamented and disapproved. This is as much as you could ask in respect to a serious cause of difference.—I now fulfill my promise to be specific as to the man recommended for your choice as a cabinet Minister from this State.—I would not take the responsibility of the recommendation on my own shoulders, and have waited until I could see and consult the only representative body in my reach—the College of State electors. They have been fully and freely consulted. Under all the known circumstances of our public men, and our leading best men, who will accept a seat in your cabinet, if tendered one, they advise, almost unanimously, that the tender be made to Ex-Gov. Jno. B. Floyd. He was one of the fifteen electors, and there were fourteen without him. Of that number twelve gave a written expression in his favor, which written expression will not be sent because it was ultimately thought, not the proper mode of making known their preference, because it might embarrass your own choice at last. One other avowed that Gov. Floyd was acceptable, but would express no preference, and the only other one made no expression at all. This was as unanimous as such a body of men from all parts of the State could be expected to be.—It

determined me, therefore, to write in the recommendation of Gov. Floyd, which I do as one of your cabinet. —The place you will tender him, if any, you yourself, of course, will designate.

The dinner given here, to the Electors elicited the expression of the warmest confidence in you to restore the harmonies of the Union and to place the Democracy on the surest footing for the future. The company was very large, of our best people, and the speeches very fine & inspiring. On the whole you couldn't be otherwise than gratified at every manifestation which has been made.

With the kindest regards

Your friend

Henry A. Wise

N. B.—Unless you were very much offended by liberties of my last, I request a line of reply to this.

Thus Wise assured Buchanan on the 5th that he had no intention of warring against him. The next day he went over the whole ground. He did not mean to say that he had deceived his friends. He was still Buchanan's true friend and had stated his view on the Constitutional power of the government to construct such a road. The core of the matter is revealed when Wise wrote that he had had to stand abuse in Virginia on account of the letter. "It is not necessary to your views or success," he wrote, "and it is fatal to mine." He said he did not mean that he would bolt the party if Cobb and certain other gentlemen received appoint-



ments."<sup>11</sup> He then discussed cabinet matters as indicated above . . . "Lie on my letter," he continued, "we'll be friends for it. And whenever I burn you so badly you cannot bear it, tell me and I will withdraw so far you won't feel a single ray of my heat. But if you always take the scorching as coolly and kindly as you have done that of my last letter, you will put my fire all out and make me so genial with your own calm temperature as to make me bearable quite near you always. I think that it is quite certain already that we will not separate far, after reading your letter over I see it is impossible. . . My dear Sir, if you will let me do it in my own wayward way I will try to befriend you to the last and uttermost . . ."<sup>12</sup>

John Tyler, Jr., had meanwhile composed a warning to the South and presented it to Wise and requested an opinion.

Attorney General's Office  
Washington City  
December 3, 1856

My dear Sir:

After the manner of Sallust to Caesar, I have thought proper to address you the enclosed communication—the birth of an eight years' travail without which I should have maddened. In it I have revealed myself for the first time and have intended it to live after me. My present purpose is to alarm the South with the truth so that her citizens may prepare to confront the danger. Hereafter I propose to present my

views in regard to the right policy to be adopted; which is left now untreated.

A Bantling that has cost so much is highly prized by me. I wish it presented to the Southern Convention and published in all the leading Southern journals, particularly the "Review," the Enquirer," the "Delta," and the "Mercury". Mr. Lyons might read it in the Convention. The publication can be with, or without my name and yours if you prefer it. But as to this, as you please—I see no objection.

Yours always faithfully

John Tyler, Jr.<sup>13</sup>

Governor Wise

Virginia

P. S. The point d'appui is the contest of 1860. You are the only man living who can make the slightest impression upon the North in opposition to Seward. This point I shall demonstrate in my next—in connection with the policy to be adopted by the South, if the Union is to be preserved in its "*beneficence to all*." But immediate dissolution were best. However, I shall treat the subject carefully. Let me hear from you in answer as to the epistle.

John Tyler, Jr.

As we have noted, Wise did not oppose Forney's entrance into the cabinet despite all the attempts of the Tylers to induce Wise to urge Buchanan not to appoint him. Wise, as has been said, was looking Northward for his future alliance. Forney was chair-

man of the Pennsylvania State Central Committee and an able journalist. Wise was too good a politician to spurn his friendship. But he wrote Buchanan that Buchanan's Southern friends were opposed to Forney. Forney refused a position abroad and requested Buchanan's support in the coming contest for United States Senator. The situation is reflected in the following letter from Robert Tyler.<sup>14</sup>

Philadelphia  
Dec. 18/56  
*Private*

My dear Gov:

Forney is a candidate for the Senate under the *immediate* auspices of Mr. Buchanan. Mr. Buchanan has written letters for him.<sup>15</sup> How is this? Has he or friend approached you. My regard for you is disinterested and I will not stand in the way of any combination for your advantage. I must say, frankly, however, that I have no more confidence in Forney's professions than in those of a whore. In the Senate, and *not* your friend—he is powerful for all sorts of mischief. Look to this, pray, and let me hear from you as speedily as may be.

I saw Jones (J. Clancey) who seems filled with gratitude in your behalf.<sup>16</sup> Bigler wished to see me as also did John Robbins the evening I passed in Washington. Bigler was sore over the attack in the *Enquirer* which he attributed to you. I explained to him how

the *Enquirer* was not your organ, etc, etc, and gave him something of a lecture.

Mr. Buchanan is here and I saw him last night. He was kind to me but evidently *thick* with Mr. Forney. I said to him on various topics reservedly all I ought to have said. Judge Black has back'd down from Forney in the Senatorial question and some intrigue may yet smash Jones.

Yr friend  
R. Tyler

Gov. Wise

The following letter of John Tyler, Jr., concerned an article in the *Richmond Enquirer* for December 16th. The article<sup>17</sup> pointed to the fact that the North could fill up the territories, later obtain an increase in power in the Senate, and finally the Constitution would be changed to the detriment of the South.

Washington  
December 21, 1856  
Sunday

Private except )<sup>18</sup>  
with discretion)  
My dear Sir:

I have my own mode of probing men. The "Senex" (Bogger) professing to be your friend, and expressing to me a great desire to promote the cause of the South, *and your especial interest*, came to me for *ideas*. Not liking his looks nor his antecedents, I

opened myself just so far as to *test* his qualities and his professions. Without unfolding to him any tangible extent my policy, I gave him *for ideas* an old article written by me in 1850 and published under the signature of "one of the people" in the Portsmouth "Pilot" of which a "good for nothing" fellow by the name of "Orr" (more sinned against than sinning) was the editor. I said to him (Senex), "If you are what you tell me, you will act upon the truths told here." And he acted.

Now for the test. Compare "Divide et infera" with "No. 1". In the first he plays his game *for office palpably*. In the second he plays his game *for office artfully*. In the first he courts Forney. In the second, emasculating me with his fat weediness he courts the South, but in so doing, "rides the saplings" dexterously. In the first and second paragraphs he takes care to bring out "know-nothing principles", alike disastrous to the South and diastrous to your fortunes. This is his own work under the dictation of Forney, Bigler and Jones, to whom it is quite evident to my mind, he has, as a great secret, unfolded himself. In the third paragraph he quotes my ideas as given him in the paper of 1850, but emasculating them of their chief force by robbing them of their relations and forms, so that the serpent may be cunningly concealed, and he may bring all things to bear in his favour for office under Buchanan.

Now let me be plain with regard to myself. I was determined—recollecting your letter of 1853, in

which you said that Cushing intimated a complaint that several of our name were before President Pierce, dividing and scattering a disposition to serve anyone—not to suffer Buchanan to labour under the same plea. I gave Cushing (recently) on whom I had a personal right of claim (and no one else) a chance now to provide for my necessities, the presidential contest being over. He has done so, but in a way to leave me at the mercy of Buchanan. He thinks I am blind to the fact (Brutus was wise in playing the fool), but I assure you he is vastly mistaken. Now of Buchanan I shall ask for nothing and will take nothing, if tendered, unless full justice be done to one more deserving: And as this will not be done, for the reason that the South is doomed (or else I have no mental vision), after the fourth of March I expect to be battling in the Southern cause as I do now without regard to office. Judge ye therefore between Senex and myself!

For the sake of the South! for the sake of yourself! for God's sake! let no more of "Senex" appear in the Richmond Enquirer. If honest ever, his blunders are worse than crimes.

Truly yours

John Tyler, Jr.

Governor Wise

Meanwhile, Wise<sup>19</sup> constantly communicated his advice to Buchanan on cabinet and diplomatic appointments. The following letter indicates that Bu-

chanan was determined to allow Wise to have a very important part in the cabinet appointment to be made from Virginia.<sup>20</sup> It also sheds valuable light on his attitude towards Forney's insistent demand for support for the senatorship.

Washington  
Dec. 24.

*Private*

My dear Govr.

Mr. Buchanan invited an interview with me on yesterday morning and commenced talking about Gov. Floyd for the Cabinet and asked me if I thought him a strong man etc., that you had mentioned his name and some others, etc., etc., He also referred to the fact of Gov. Floyd having been backed by the Electoral College. I advised him to consult *you* and do what you wanted in Virginia. He at once said that he would appoint no one from Virginia who did not have your endorsement and that he would cut the Gordon knot if necessary. I then described to him what I considered to be the state of parties in the South, and spoke of you as I think of you, etc., etc., gave him my advice to keep you with him under any and all contingencies. I described your character and said to him that I thought you were with him both from feeling and policy and would stick to him and beat his enemies for him and the South provided he strengthened you and put confidence in you unreservedly. He said (cocking his eye) that he believed *you were his*

*'friend and he intended keeping you a friend.* He said something about Mr. Cobb and I incidentally remarked that he was a good fellow but did not represent many people South. Next came up Mr. Forney's Senatorial pretensions and I *walked* into him with extreme candor. Mr. Buchanan informed me that he did not make the support of Mr. Forney for the Senate any test of Democracy or devotion to himself.

*You must keep a strong sharp eye on this matter of the Cabinet.* He wishes me to interest myself in the business and to write my views or to visit him soon. Have you anything to say to me about Floyd or anyone else that you would prefer that I can present to him?

I received your letter on yesterday morning before leaving Philadelphia. I am here on some business, and I have undeceived Gov. Bigler as you desired, and will see him also in the course of the day. Forney is not your friend and never will be, I fear. He likes Bright and Walker and Cobb and that style of men. If I supposed he could be made your friend I would let him pass, d - - n him, but I am certain after getting into the Senate he would use his influence in Pennsylvania against you. I shall go to New York at as early a day as possible.

I write hurriedly,

Yr friend truly,

Ro Tyler

His Exly

H. A. Wise

Phil: Dec. 21, '56

*Confidential*<sup>21</sup>

My dear Govr:

I have just returned to the City after passing the night at Wheatland with Mr. Buchanan. He was very cordial & conversed with me very freely.

First & foremost, I was highly gratified to discover that *you* are his . . . . favorite of all public men. *This is beyond question.* He talked about . . . . & he plainly designs to favor your presidential aspirations for the succession.

Secondly, he is greatly bothered about a proper solution for Sec. of State. Gen'l Cass, he says, is strongly pressed & from the South strange to say.<sup>22</sup> But while he does not altogether . . . . him, his mind is evidently not 'i' the vein.' He thinks Gen'l Cass too old a man (now 75). He spoke of Thurman of Ohio, a young man comparatively—the nephew of Allen & a man of no national reputation, but of exceeding ability & vigor. He has the idea of managing the State Dept. himself . . . . that Cobb will *not* do for Sec. of State, but thinks that with two State Rights men South he might go in somewhere. He says that Cobb is *not* opposed to you & declared in this very language, *that he would appoint no man of his cabinet unfriendly to Henry A. Wise.* Cobb he seems to think easily manageable. He spoke of Indiana & his supposed or real obligations to Bright, but it was said that if Bright was a part of any clique or alliance unfriendly to you there was an end of it. He speaks of A. V. Brown of

Tennessee recommended by the Electors of the State & yourself. Mr. Staunton (a friend of yours too) has been *particularly* recommended. Altogether, my visit was a very agreeable one.

Thirdly, I correctly gave Appleton (who expresses himself as your friend & admirer) to understand you were not disposed to fight with Mr. Forney altho *I* did handle him very roughly.<sup>23</sup> Matters *at present* could not stand better, but I fear this man Forney on your account. He is no friend of yours & I fear cannot be made one & if not he can & will do great damage to you if elected Senator. If I thought he would be your friend . . . . him I would try to be quiet, tho' the policy of hesitating is awful & will be most severely felt & greatly deplored hereafter. *I don't think he can succeed.* By the by, Mr. Buchanan is very dubious about a man from Pa. at all, but you should have Jones or some suitable person who would accept such a place. Have you thought about the organ? *I* would go into that with Mr. Appleton if money could be made, but money is indispensable to me. I suppose *the South* would be satisfied with me. The idea . . . . me within a day or two. If you can take anything out of it, consider it, provided I can make some money. I have never yet for fifteen years known one day free from pecuniary embarrassments & the most painful . . . . I believe I have worked as well & as successfully under extraordinary difficulties as any man. Still tho I have lived down the prejudices of this community & enjoy now its general confidence & support

& see before me a dawning political future, I suffer terribly all the time from pecuniary embarrassments. You see, my friend, I write to you freely *as a friend*. I do not believe I have ever said as much to anyone before, for I have learned to be both patient & distrustful of the affairs of life so far as the general world is concerned.

But . . .

Mr. B. is with you now. Keep him so. I impressed him that it was my conviction that you entertained the . . . desire to smoothe the course of his adm. & to do everything & anything a man in your position should do, that personal & political friendships would suggest. What think you of R. J. Walker for Sec. of State?

Yrs. sin,

*Ro. Tyler.*

The following communication of Robert Tyler is directly to the point. At the time he speaks of Forney it will be remembered that Forney was editor of the Pierce organ at Washington. Buchanan did not want to allow his name to be used at the outset. During that time Robert Tyler was inclined to move for Wise, not for Pierce. Forney naturally favored the latter.

Phila Jan'y 5, 1857<sup>24</sup>

My dear Mr. Buchanan,

I have received the enclosed from Govr. Wise with the request to transmit it to you. He declares it to

be one among a hundred from your best and truest friends. He thinks he is bound to place such papers before you. He hopes to have the pleasure to see you again; where, he does not say, but most probably at Washington.<sup>24</sup>

You are perfectly aware that I anxiously desire to do everything in my humble power to promote your wishes—your happiness—your Renown. I can say that to you without the least danger of having my motives misunderstood. I beg you, in the light of personal friendship, to command me in any way in which you think I may privately serve you.

Govr. Wise says you think my hostility to Forney unaccountable. I am willing to aid even in doing anything proper & reasonable for Col. Forney. But I have expressed my views of opposition to this senatorial (?) profit *on your account* & the Party's account. It cannot fail to produce a bitter feud & to be greatly injurious in its consequences. Col. Forney *must* know this. I consider his conduct very ungenerous. Besides he has no claim to press such selfish pretensions: What did he for your nomination? He would have lost Virginia by a foolish opposition to Govr. Wise & he would so have destroyed you. The People would not stand it. I opposed it & met the moment (may be movement abbreviated) in the committees of the Party in three Districts here & put it down.

What right has he to ask you to knock such men as Foster, Robbins, Buchan (?) (& others) on the head. These men all did you equal or better service.

They were your friends—Col. Forney has made them your bitter enemies for life—at a time too when for your honor & glory you will need the help of every friend. There are other issues—but enough.

I am *your* friend, not Col. Forney's—This is the key to my views.

Yr friend truly

Ro: Tyler

Hon:

James Buchanan

Sherwood Forest<sup>25</sup>

Jan. 5, 1857

Dear John:

After a two months siege of sickness, from which I almost despaired at times, of recovering, I am now able to take my place at the table, and to attend somewhat to my private concerns—I can not however, pronounce myself well, as I am still from slight causes, forced to declare myself on the sick list—However, I trust by strict attention, to weather the storm and to be restored to usual health—My thoughts during my confinement have run very much upon the future which might follow my departure from the world and especially, upon the history of my life, and particularly on the incidents of my four years in Washington—I have by me, you are probably aware, a narrative written by myself of the early part of that time, embracing my Bank vetoes etc., etc., but have not by any means finished the sketch of my whole service and I

had made the necessary provision to place all my papers in the hands of my sons, and sons in law, who are grown to manhood—That a fair history of my administration should be written by a competent person is a matter very near to my heart—and therefore, it was with no common degree of satisfaction that I learned a few days ago through a letter from one who professed to know something about it, that Mr. Cushing had resolv'd to undertake the task after retiring from office—I hope most sincerely that this may be so—From a man of his eminent abilities, who was also a prominent actor in Congress at the time, and intimately associated with me and my friends, and therefore, well acquainted with measures and motives, I should anticipate not only full and perfect justice, but also a work to go down to a late posterity—If he should set about the task, letters and papers in my possession should be furnished him *ad libitum*, along with any explanations he might desire—Whatever time might be assigned for the publication of such a work, whether during my life or after my death, I feel it to be important that it should be written while I live—My own explanations might be wanting to render that narrative clear and perfect.—Express to Mr. Cushing the pleasure with which the mere rumor has fill'd me—and my anxious desire that he should execute the task—

I am gratified that he has plac'd you along side of himself in your office—The only fear is that his successor, if successor he is to have, may prefer some

other associate and thus cut you adrift— While you are in office, you should if possible make yourself acquainted with the whole volume of decisions made by the Attorney Generals, and write nothing for the Newspapers which is not official.

We were all disappointed in not seeing you and Robert at Xmas—the weather and ice I suppose prevented—

Yr Father

J. Tyler

Genl. Tyler

Wise's apprehension of the Hunter faction is evident in the letter below. Slidell was, in my opinion, more powerful in Washington than Wise.<sup>26</sup> I also believe that he was entitled to Buchanan's consideration, even admitting all the importance of Wise's services. Had Slidell not organized the Buchanan movement at Cincinnati I doubt whether the boom could have reached the point where Wise's services could have played their pivotal part.

Richmond Va.<sup>27</sup>

Jan'y 9th, 1857

My dear Robt

I am going to be exacting, but Cass, Cobb, and Bright "I ain't going to stand anyhow!"— Now you may set that down.— That is a Forney & Slidell move and they are bending their *talons* to devour me & set up for a *Kentucky Hunter*.— If Mr. B. treats me

fairly, & I don't fear he will not, he will not meet me to debate a foregone conclusion, but to consult about what is already *not concluded on*. I am jealous about being trusted, and the friends who don't trust I account as betraying me. I mean to have a *fair* hearing about the formation of the Cabinet or none at all.— I care nothing at all about A. V. Brown. He is a palaverer of the Grundy order of Sam Slick.

Do you be cautious. But impress on Mr. B. he had better for us both be perfectly candid with me. Forney is not my friend. I hear of Slidell's movements & givings out.

Yrs truly

Henry A. Wise

Robt. Tyler Esqr.

Philade. Jan 10, 1857<sup>28</sup>

My dear Govr.

As I have anticipated an insurrection has broken out among the Democratic members of the legislature Forney has been nominated by partial caucus, but 9 members refused to go into caucus & this is war to the knife. Forney will be defeated I think sure. .

My friend Robbins received 21 (?) votes against 35 with the whole power of the President elect against him. I will see if a compromise can't be effected on Judge Black who told me this morning he was your



friend for the next Presidency. I do not know that anything can be done *now* but will try.

Yr friend ever

Ro: Tyler

Govr. A. Wise

It is better for you that Forney should *not* prevail I am quite sure & resolute about this. Nevertheless I have taken occasion to declare casually everywhere that you were not unfriendly to Forney being unfortunately indifferent on the subject. I am receiving invitations to public functions from all parts of the country & have answered the Cincinnati (Ohio) people with a brief letter to be published.

Yrs R. T.

Every effort will be made to bring things right for Forney but my judgment is that those efforts will fail.

The defeat of Forney for the United States Senate was brought about by the very astute Cameron, who successfully organized a coalition for himself. It is said that three Democrats who were "persuaded" to join his scheme found Harrisburg a place too unpleasant in which to remain. The Democrats petitioned the United States Senate through Senator Bigler (Pennsylvania) not to recognize Cameron's right to a seat; but of course no such action was taken. Thus at the outset of his presidency, Buchanan found his most formidable opponent from his own state in the United States Senate.

Richmond Va.<sup>30</sup>

Jan'y 16th, 1857

My Déar Robt-

The defeat of Forney has stricken Mr. B. a severe blow. I wrote to you yesterday what I repeat to-day, it may make bad worse and defeat your ends. I fear F. will be more potential for mischief than ever. You, especially, must be cautious, and keep John quiet. He is inclined to an outburst. It would ruin you.— I will see Mr. B. before long, and see the whole ground & what can be done. You are mistaken—he is as vigorous as ever—but remember that he has gained his acme, & had *no more need* to be cautious or afraid—Don't make him vindictive.

Yrs truly

Henry A. Wise

The following letter to the editor of the works of John C. Calhoun shows a phase of the Hunter-Wise movements in Virginia.

Richmond Va.<sup>30</sup>

February 7th, 1857

Dear Sir,

I have just returned from a short absence & have to thank you for yours of the 24th Ult:— I appreciate Carr very highly. He is a good, sensible, and pure man and I would delight to serve him. He is worthy of much higher place than you seek for him & I should like to obtain not only something better for

him, but a place which would retain him to his Mother Comth— At the proper time, after the inauguration, I will be glad of the privilege to put my head together with his other friends to serve him as you propose or in some better way.

I assure you that friendship to Mr. Hunter is no objection with any one to me. I have promoted him most cordially in the past & wd. do so again in the future. Our friends, I fear, mistake somewhat our relations. He was, if not now, a candidate for the Presidency. That iron has not yet entered into my soul. If my prominence and promotion are offences in the eyes of his friends, my whole power shall be exerted to prevent my friends from doing him any injustice. I claim to be and to have ever been as good a friend of State Rights as he who claims to be foremost in their cause. Late events tried some of us. I found, thank God, I had a purpose and I would have tried faithfully to execute it. Some men's state rights are so abstract that they can't be applied or defined or brought into action. Events will yet try us all. I am ready for the ordeal.—But this is vague & idle—

I loved Mr. Calhoun and he honored me very far in his last years by his full confidence. I have many valuable letters from him. . Yours recall to me that I wrote to him many hurried epistles of which I have no copies. Will you allow me to interchange copies with you. I will gladly bear the expense & give you the trouble only to employ a scribe to copy my letters if

you don't feel at liberty to send me the originals. I will send you copies of Mr. C's.—

Your letter was in all respects acceptable & I am

Yours truly

Henry A. Wise

R. K. Cralle Esq.

For his friend Beverley Tucker, Wise wished a newspaper position. Later, Tucker was sent to Liverpool as consul, where he received a salary of \$7500, which was not so small an amount for those ancient times. Wise also seemed somewhat friendly to Fernando Wood<sup>31</sup> although he did not urge him for a cabinet post.<sup>32</sup> The names of McDonald of Georgia, and Vallandigham, the well-known Peace Democrat of the Civil War period were also among the possibilities which Buchanan and Wise discussed.

As time went on, it appears that Wise became more reconciled to the idea of Cobb as a cabinet minister, but the idea of having Bright in that body was wont to arouse his utmost dislike. In those days, Bright was regarded as a worthy rival of Douglas in the race for the control of the Democracy in the Northwest. Rumor had it that he was much in the good graces of Buchanan. Bright seldom wrote letters and some of those he did write made him much trouble. Hence there is little at the present time available on his relations with Buchanan. But it is certain that they were close and cordial. Wise's allusions to Bright were far from charitable or complimentary. In one letter

he hailed him the "money pimp of Corcoran of Washington", and at an earlier date as a "political whore".

Bright was something more to Wise than just another potential rival for presidential honors. He was on good terms with Hunter for whom Wise had now a less ardent friendship. Neither did Wise have a good word for Hunter's friends—Bocock, Seddon, and Mason. Buchanan was worried over Wise's attitude toward Bright, as he was giving him serious consideration for the cabinet. The difficulty was solved when Bright was re-elected to the Senate. Both Buchanan and Slidell felt relieved. Bright's rival, Wright of Indiana, was sent to Berlin as United States minister to the Prussian government.

Naturally, Buchanan took Wise into his confidence over the cabinet member to be selected from Virginia. Wise preferred Faulkner but said the party wanted Floyd. The latter had the endorsement of the electors of the state. Accordingly, Floyd was chosen, and when John Y. Mason, our minister to France died in Paris in 1859, Buchanan appointed Faulkner to the vacancy. Mason had been an old friend of Buchanan's, but was an appointee of Pierce. He had anticipated his removal and wrote Buchanan after his election. He was in bad financial straits, and asked Buchanan if he could not find some federal post for him so as to sustain him in his old age and difficulties. Buchanan assured him that he had no intention of removing him and so he had remained at his place.

John Buchanan Floyd, the Secretary of War, was not personally known to Buchanan before his appointment. He was an F. F. V., and like his father, had been Governor of Virginia. Both father and son were States Sovereignty men and out-spoken in their views. The elder Floyd had wrought consternation in the camp of Jackson when during nullification, he announced his intention of resisting the passage of federal troops through Virginia should they attempt the coercion of South Carolina. At the same time he had urged mediation on the leaders of the nullification movement.

Floyd had been active in his support of Buchanan in the 1856 campaign. He was an excellent speaker and had delivered an able speech in New York and in other places. In spite of the slanders of his enemies he kept our military forces in good condition during his term of office. Up to now, no proof has been given that he in any way profited financially from any transactions of his department. Although, like his father, he was a "States Rights man of the strict construction Old Virginia school,"<sup>33</sup> he was "a practical, conservative, and in favor of the Union in his policies." He was not an active secessionist, and hoped until the outbreak of hostilities that a struggle might be averted. During the war he served first in Confederate and later in Virginia service. He did not have the happiest relations either with Davis or Wise. Being of a proud and independent nature, he did not readily submit to dictation. Tradition says that the Floyds were descended from an Indian chieftan's daughter.

Among others discussed by Buchanan and Wise was Robert J. Walker, whose conduct as Governor of Kansas territory was later to cause Buchanan much annoyance. Wise had no great personal dislike for Walker, but he expressed the apprehension that the gentleman was too heavily involved in land speculations. Wise was prone to lecture of this "evil". Hunter and Douglas, as well as Walker, were interested in western lands. Buchanan was also advised by other friends not to select Walker.

In spite of vehement warnings and protests from the younger Tylers concerning Forney, Wise was not inclined to oppose his appointment. His attitude was not shared by other leaders of the South who blamed Forney for persuading Pierce to appoint northern men governors of Kansas Territory. These men went over to the Freesoilers who seemed to have victory on their banners. By such acts southern men had suffered a check in obtaining their share of the new region. "Mr. Forney," wrote Wise, "is, without being obnoxious to me personally, very unacceptable to your friends in the South." Later he wrote, "I am not opposed to Forney." He spoke the truth, for Forney was in friendly correspondence with him at the time. Wise wished to remain on good terms with Douglas, whom Forney also favored. Besides, Forney was a very able journalist and it might have been bad policy to offend him.

The failure of Forney to realize his intense although unmerited desire to have a place in the cabinet or to be the editor of Buchanan's official organ at

Washington made him bitter against the Southern leaders who had thwarted him. Later this feeling extended to Buchanan. Defeated for the Senatorship by the astute Cameron at the very outset of Buchanan's term, he refused the consulate at Liverpool and became gradually estranged from Buchanan. He opposed the administration on the Lecompton issue and supported Douglas in his struggle with the President. A little later he joined the Republican forces. Robert Tyler succeeded to the headship of the State Central Committee in Pennsylvania. The hostility of Forney and his bitter pen cost the Buchanan machine many votes in the Keystone. Forney continued the feud long after Buchanan was dead, although the latter had hoped that Forney would return to the party at the time when the English Bill was offered to heal the breach made in the party over the Lecompton Constitution.

There are some indications that even the patience of Buchanan was tried by Wise's frequent suggestions. To his remonstrances the Governor wrote, "If I worry you, they worry me . . . You have never been used to being teased by children." He might have remembered that Buchanan had been the foster parent to his nephew and niece<sup>34</sup> from their childhood. In one letter Buchanan felt constrained to remind Wise, "In forming a cabinet, I cannot select all the members from those who have been my friends or yours."<sup>35</sup>

## Chapter IV

### TROUBLES WITH KANSAS

The idea of shifting Northern hatred from the slavery agitation to an anti-Mormon crusade now appealed<sup>1</sup> to Tyler who urged Buchanan to action. Buchanan later settled the problem quietly and by diplomacy.

Phila: April 27, 1857

My dear Sir/

The Public mind is becoming greatly excited on the subject of *Mormonism*. The Popular Idea is rapidly maturing that Mormonism (already felt slightly in our large Northern cities) should be put down & utterly extirpated.

*I believe that we can supercede the Negro-Mania with the almost universal excitements of an Anti-Mormon Crusade.* Certainly it is a subject which concerns *all* the Religious Bodies & reaches every man's fireside with a peculiar interest. Should you, with your accustomed grip, seize this question with a strong fearless & resolute hand, the Country I am sure will rally to you with an earnest enthusiasm & the pipings of Abolitionism will hardly be heard amidst the thunders of the storm we shall raise. Were I President I

would put down & cast out this hideous imposture, equally at War with Conscience, Reason & Philosophy, at all hazards. I would take the ground that the case was anomalous & altogether exceptional—without the limits of ordinary Constitutional treatment—and that the principles of the Democratic Party in regard to Territories consequently had no application. The eyes & hearts of the Nation may be made to find so much interest in Utah as to forget Kansas! ✓

I see (by telegraph) that Mr. Forney has purchased one fourth of the *Pennsylvanian* & is coming here as Editor. I am heartily glad of this provided he will come here to serve your cause faithfully & to conduct his Editorial office with strict impartiality to all. In this event he will be most cordially welcome & will succeed—otherwise he will be certain to fail in a manner deplorable to yourself, & injurious to the Party.

I send an article from the *Herald*. Pray put not the slightest faith in Bennett, a greater or more mischievous knave does not live!

ever your friend

Ro: Tyler

His Exclty

James Buchanan

Bennett consented to be wooed by Buchanan and remained in his camp most of the time for the next four years. Bennett disliked Forney and had used his influence to keep him from the cabinet.

Of a more practical and less romantic nature than waging a crusade on the Mormons was the task of satisfying the Catholics at home.

Phila: April 30/57

Private

& pray read attentively<sup>2</sup>

My dear Mr. Buchanan/

After the full conversation your kindness permitted me to enjoy with you, when I was last in Washington, on the very important subject I then brought to your notice, I should not again venture to allude to the matter were I not perfectly satisfied that my absolute duty to you & to the subject required it.

Since my return here I have instituted a deliberate and critical investigation into this business, and the result is that I discover but one feeling from all parts of the Country, a strong & universal feeling in regard to the Person who should be selected as the purest type for Catholic Representation aboard—and that feeling is in favor of Joseph R. Chandler. There is no suspicion of doubt or difficulty on this point. Enclosed is a Document of Recommendation signed by *Fifteen Bishops*, eight of whom are native-born American Citizens. You have already seen the recommendatory letters submitted for your private inspection by three Archbishops three vicars-General of the U States & by *Dr Ryder*. In point of fact, *looking to the object I have in view*, he is the man to be selected, if, in your Will & Wisdom, it can be *possibly arranged*.

I send the letter of the Bishops for your single eye to be returned to me if you please.

In this matter I am instructed to say that a delay of six months would be preferred (rather than a disappointment) provided at the end of that time it might be your pleasure to confer upon Mr Chandler *any* European Mission. Dr. Ryder is of the opinion that the appointment of a liberal Protestant to Rome would be entirely satisfactory & perhaps Politic.

Be assured that I feel myself particularly fortunate in having been able, whether *directly* or indirectly, thus to concentrate in a visible & enduring form for your loyal support hereafter, so much energy of Intellect & such vast strength of numbers, as is present in the evident personal bearing of this application on the part of the great Interest now appearing before you.

Now my advice *is to give them the precise* Appointee they have indicated. The affair is then finished on your part, & the duty of others remains to be performed without a chance for reservation or cavil.

Altho I may, perhaps, occupy too much space let me specify an item or two.

1st There are not less than three, most likely four millions of Catholics (men women & children) in the U States.

2d There are in the Eastern Diocese of Pennsylvania 230,000 or as many as 40,000 voters, native & adopted Catholic Citizens.

1857

Surely I need go no further with the view of satisfying you in the present exigency of Public Affairs—think of the Future too— of the importance of securing such an interest as this by taking it as it were into your own personal grasp & keeping.

Do my dear Sir, give this subject your fullest reflection & see if it be not in your power to gratify these gentlemen. This Appt would be worth in political effect fifty of that of Wm B. Read.

Enclosed I send an article from the "Catholic Herald" of this City, the organ of the Bishop. I do not suppose this paper ever had in it a word of politics before. It is an earnest of the Future—

ever affectionately  
with the greatest respect

Yr friend

Ro: Tyler

His Excely

James Buchanan

The cabinet selected and the Administration begun, problems in the West vied with local factional fights in interest. Harvie of the Hunter faction was disposed to take things as they were for the time being, rather than open a war on the administration over appointments. "Buchanan had no especial reason to confide in us that I know of and therefore we have no ground to complain that he didn't." He seemed rather to expect to oppose that Administration over some future issues. However, Francis Mallory, of Norfolk,

worried lest Wise snatch the senatorship from Hunter. Part of Wise's pugnacious attitude Mallory laid at the door of Hunter men who provoked him. Wise had been in Washington, and on Floyd's course in the coming contest, Mallory had no information. By May Beverly Tucker was able to write Buchanan of the latter's strength in Virginia, and that even the few Hunter men who remained discontented were coming over to his cause. Wise was "behaving well."

Midsummer found Tyler worrying over what effect Forney's coming to Philadelphia would have upon the future political fortunes of Wise. He confided these thoughts to Wise on July 16th. Walker had been sent to Kansas instead of being placed in the Cabinet. Tyler at this time wished to have Wise leave Walker alone since Hunter, Wise's rival, had "given up" Kansas.

Phil. July 16, '57"

My dear Gov:

Your letter is very satisfactory to me. You have assumed the right position. It is what I deemed you should do. Mr. Buchanan is really as great a Wise man as your friend, I believe, but looking at the *whole case* I felt it was necessary before consenting to take the responsibility of a great Southern contest for the Administration that you should *demand Hostages*; and mark you do not rest satisfied with *mere demand*.

Now unless the *Cabal* that seeks to establish its headquarters here, seeking to *govern* the President—

yes, to govern him—for present and future purposes of plunder, ambition, and the gratification of malice, are . . . to interpose, *we shall certainly give you this state*, provided you possess Mr. Buchanan. In friendly conversation Judge Black (the Attorney General) *told me* that Forney paper would be hostile *to you*. He is no politician (Judge Black) and an honest-hearted man and sustains Forney in his editorial ambitions from personal considerations, I think. The remark, however, was not made to me in confidence and I have no right to withhold it from you. Of course, however, I say this in confidence to you.

Pryor is an able writer. His articles are muscular in style—plausible in substance and he has just enough right on his side to give immense trouble.

I would not care to defend Walker as a possibility. I would maintain that true statesmanship contemplates facts and is content to make the best of circumstances. The Badge Proviso—Hunter's speech giving up Kansas—and the abomination of squatter sovereignty all excluded the idea that the authors and abettors of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill expected Kansas to become a slave state. No well informed man in the country has imagined that under the most favorable condition of things, slavery in Kansas would survive the first legislation under the state constitution. The useful fruits of the Kansas-Nebraska excitement and the Dred Scott Decision of the Supreme Court—the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise *in terms* by the Federal legislature and the removal of all judicial &

legislative obstructions to the natural Territorial Expansion of the Slave States. The past is now safe—Kansas to be made a Slave State (with a large majority of people in it desiring a free state) except by treachery to a just principle reluctantly established by Congress confirmed by Mr. Buchanan's election, established . . . and in security of Southern . . . or by force of arms embroiling the peace of the Union. It is not a question for hot blood and fine sarcastic speeches. It is one of the branches of a great question that may ultimately involve the rights of property in sixteen millions worth of slaves. It must be dealt with in no Hotspur temper or for partisan objects—but with cold calculation and deliberate caution of Wise statesmanship, etc.

I perceive the editorial in the Enquirer of this morning is the echo of my letter to the Independence Square meeting.

Many of the officials about here are giving aid and comfort to the "Press".

The weather is hot and I am not very well.

Your friend,

Ro. Tyler

Hon. H. A. Wise

Forney was always restless. He had been thwarted by certain Southerners from having a place in Buchanan's cabinet where he had hoped to wield the patronage of the office department or to become Secretary of Interior. Thwarted in his desire



to be the editor of a Buchanan official organ in Washington, he determined to go to Philadelphia and set up a paper for himself. Neither Tyler nor Buchanan were very hopeful over the enterprise. The Press would be a competitor of the time honored Buchanan organ, the Pennsylvanian.

Phila: July 16/57

My dear Mr Buchanan/

Our friend George Febinger assisted by the Navy Yard men succeeded in securing on Monday Night, the Precincts in the First District in which there was manifested a plain disposition to assail the Adn. The Vote for Officers of the Convention was no test against the Adn. but was a blow aimed at our present fool-Mayor. Rankin is notorious for his vile abuse of Vaux & he was voted for in actual contempt & derision of our City & Executive. As reported the vote stood for Rankin 76 for Barnes (?) 80. Nor was the latter gentleman a very particular friend of the Mayor. Any respectable man in Rankin's place could have been elected by a large majority.

I met the Collector yesterday—we shook hands & had a kindly talk, but he did not allude to our cause of disagreement or to your letter, nor did I. I explained to Mr. Mealey your kind feelings toward him & that you might request the Collector to restore him to office, by & by, but he informed me that he preferred not to go in. He is however staunch in his friendship to you & assisted Febinger the other night. Van Dyke is very

bitter in his denunciations of Baker. I advised him to go & see you.

I am informed that Cols. Forney & Page—at the instance of the former—have made friends. The expected "Press" seems to have a curious sort of support in a strange mixture of your bitterest enemies & many of the office-holders, who should be your devoted friends. Forney & Haines (?) Kane (?) from Washington in the same car. I must say that altho I thought he talked a little coldly, he spoke in terms of great respect of yourself. He declared his paper should support your Adn & asked me very strongly, whether I was for you for another term (or as he said *the succession*). I replied that I should support your Flag so long as you chose to keep it flying (as I shall do against *one & all*) & I trusted however averse you might be to Public Life, that something might occur to render it necessary for the Country to stamp the one term principle of the Demagogues with its disapprobation. Forney then spoke of your excellent common sense &c &c the matter passed. Still the "Press" is a great mistake & I distrust it. I think it altogether hostile in intention to Wise & an effort to establish a *Cabal* to govern you. Forney I am afraid will not be satisfied with anything less than *Dominion*.

My position is a very simple one & Govr. Wise understands it. I shall stand by you my great Friend against all & every opposition & I am for Wise afterwards, & I believe with a slight modification Wise is so too. I have a letter from him, this morning express-

ing entire satisfaction with you. He has come to your policy nobly. I think he was a little jealous of your friendship or supposed disposition for Cobb, but as far as his ambition will permit he is sincerely attached to you; & I believe you are almost the only Statesman now actively engaged in the Political World for whose character & talents his own genius & Courage entertain the profoundest respect.

The weather is very warm & I am sick today. Believe me ever

Your friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>s</sup>

His Excl<sup>y</sup>

The President

I sent a package of recommendations for Norman (Inspector of ..... ) It is right I should say that since I wrote several respectable gentlemen (not office seekers) have called on me to request me to write you to make no change. I told them I would do so. Campbell the present incumbent is also a cousin of Campbell's the Postmaster Genl—to be considered.

Walker's policy on Kansas became more and more unpopular with champions of Southern Rights as the summer wore on. White Sulphur Springs became a rendezvous for those who were dissatisfied with the speeches of the Governor of Kansas. Robert Tyler's letter indicated above showed no indication of the attempt of the administration to force any drastic action of a pro-slavery nature in Kansas. Due to

refusal to vote it was plain that the coming convention which was the only constitution making body in the territory by the rule of the Enabling Act, would be in the hands of the pro-slavery ring of the Democratic party. Wise had contested against the doctrine of Squatter Sovereignty, which would have given the more mobile patrons of the Emmigrant Aid Society the greater power in the Territory. Hence there was no sign of his future dissatisfaction.

The friends of Hunter looked upon the rise of Wise with no little uneasiness. As early as July, Thomas S. Bocock, member of Congress, warned Hunter that Wise's aspirations for Hunter's place in the Senate though dampened by the spring elections had revived. Bocock thought that Wise hoped to maneuver Hunter into a position of known hostility to the Buchanan. Therefore he would ferment the idea that hostility to Walker was hostility to Buchanan. This was a trap into which Bocock had no intention of falling. "I am clearly and openly hostile to Walker and his Kansas policy," he wrote. "But I do not think that either principle or policy requires it to be caused to the extend of opposition to the administration . . . ." The next day another admirer wrote also, "Nothing would gratify Wise more than to make up an issue with you on the Kansas imbroglio. . . ." John S. Barbour Jr. warned Hunter that Floyd as well as Wise was secretly setting up an organization against him in preparation for the Senatorial contest in the coming fall. Charles Faulkner whom it will be remembered was favored by

Wise in preference to Floyd for the cabinet was reported as being willing to aid Wise to a seat in the United States Senate.\* In return Wise was to support Faulkner for Governor and prepare to take the place of the United States Senator, James M. Mason, when the latter's turn should expire. Walker's policy was causing the administration much trouble and Forney's possible conduct added to its uneasiness. The Bright-Douglas feud was coming as usual. Forney's paper seemed to be accredited with building up a Presidential boom for Cobb. Some of Hunter's friends were trying hard to prevent Roger A. Pryor, one of the fire-eating Virginia editors to confine the attack of the "South" to Walker.

William Old<sup>o</sup> wrote of the Anti-Hunter forces "Their assaults upon 'secessionists', 'ultras', 'extremists', opponents of the manoeuvres of 1850," & c., and their efforts to show that we must be dependent upon the Northern democracy, can be used to show their intention to prefer allying the democracy to the party North to granting anything to the Cotton States." Their remarks show that Wise kept his face steadfastly Northward when he calculated the prospects of a political alliance.

Old also wrote that a hostile Southern combine to defeat Buchanan men for Speaker and Clerk "may frighten Buchanan, and its execution will prostrate him, but it will exasperate the democracy here, and throw off many from your support." He also added with foresight "the election of a Black Republican,

however severe a blow to Buchanan, will react upon us not only in Virginia but in states farther South."<sup>10</sup>

By the middle of August William Lamb<sup>11</sup> put the matter squarely before Hunter asking him his position towards the Administration. Hunter was not yet ready to state his attitude publicly. Hunter pledged Lamb to secrecy but wrote, "I have never said or done anything against the administration nor have I any hostile feeling towards it. On the contrary I wish it success. What possible interest could I have in breaking it down or dividing the party? . . ."<sup>12</sup>

At the time (September) letters indicate that Floyd was opposed to Hunter.<sup>13</sup> He was also reported as desiring to get his brother into the Virginia Senate. Hunter's friends in Washington were discreetly but actively working against the impression made on Buchanan that Hunter was opposed to him. Buchanan dropped the remark that he supposed Hunter would be opposed to him often. He was evidently trying to find where Hunter would stand if re-elected, was angling for his support, or was ready to make some arrangement involving mutual support.

Hunter's friend, Montague, said that Cobb, backed by Forney, was playing for the succession. Already he foresaw what others must have also foreseen that Douglas was likely to rebel. This was long before LeCompton became an issue. Wise too, of course, would be left in the cold if Cobb should win the administration's favor.

The concern of Hunter's correspondents was how to dissolve or destroy the coalition of Wise, Floyd and Faulkner.<sup>14</sup> Wise was erratic, and hence could be depended upon to show his policy. Floyd, on the other hand, caused considerable concern. There was a lack of agreement as to how to treat with him. Some thought that the coalition would dissolve due to rivalry or diverging interests.

William Crump,<sup>15</sup> a physician of Richmond, prominent in both his profession and politics, thought that the truce between Wise and Floyd would be short-lived. "Be assured," he wrote, "he (Floyd) is your nature ally, not in its modern sense, but he is a thorough State-rights man, he is a gentleman by education and by instinct and whatever deflections he has exhibited from the strict virtue he is still a gentleman, manly, generous, and brave."

But there might be reasons why Floyd could not be placated. Richard K. Cralle<sup>16</sup> wrote that Floyd had his eye on the Vice Presidency. If that were true he must unhorse Hunter as a presidential possibility. Therefore Cralle wanted Hunter to nip Floyd's chances in the bud by having some Whig friend in the lower house get some "dirty facts" in regard to the sale of Fort Snelling. While Cralle claimed to have some bad evidence on that sale it ought to be said that no evidence has ever conclusively shown that Floyd made money on the deal. While there seems to be some doubt as to just how advisable the sale was, Floyd seems to have received no direct benefit. Any

gain he may have made must have been more of a political nature.<sup>17</sup> He and Senator Rice of Minnesota were close political friends. I have found no evidence to indicate that the latter gentleman profited directly by the sale. According to Cralle, at the bottom of Floyd's seeming interest in Wise was the intent to set Wise against Hunter thus killing both for the Presidency and making himself thereby available for the second place on the ticket. The letters indicated that Thompson and Forney were friendly to Hunter. No doubt this was on personal grounds, but it also worked along the lines of political ambitions. By October Hunter decided that conditions justified an expression of a public nature from him. The first letter now available was written to his friend, the Hon. Shelton F. Leake,<sup>18</sup> and a second commenting upon the resolutions adopted by a Democratic meeting at Rockingham, October 19th.

Upon the question of his attitude towards the Buchanan Administration, Hunter came directly to the point, and thus dealt a staggering blow to any who had hoped he would oppose it. "I have to say, first," he wrote, "that the imputation of hostility, on my part, towards the administration of Buchanan is founded upon nothing that I have either said or done. I vote for him as President and not only entertain no feeling of hostility towards him, but I wish him success. He has only to carry out the principles of the Democratic party, as we understand them in Virginia, to command my cordial support." While he merely

refused to commit himself on future issues in advance he hoped and expected to support Buchanan's administration. He had accepted the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, although it sacrificed some of the considerations of feeling and interest at the South, for the sake of party unity.

By this time many people in the South were filled with wrath at what they considered the betrayal of their interests in Kansas by Governor Walker. Some of their anger was vented on Buchanan who had appointed him. Walker's speeches which indicated a leaning towards the cause of Free Kansas displeased them. Many people in the lower South since 1854 had held that Kansas should be settled by the slave holding interests leaving Nebraska to be organized as a free soil territory.

Hunter who drew support from the State Rights group as well as moderates did not wish to endorse Walker. On the other hand he desired to keep within the Democratic Party and avoid a break with the administration. He saw the danger of a split in the party and wished to avoid it if possible. His indictment of Walker contains allusions to some of the Governor's remarks which had produced a crisis in the party.

"Under such circumstances it was my opinion improper for the highest Executive Officer in the Territory, the Governor of Kansas, to attempt to influence the decision of the people of that Territory, upon this question of slavery. Such an interference on the

part of any branch of the Federal Government, was inconsistent with the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Neither do I recognize his authority to declare that, if they (the convention) do not appoint a fair and impartial mode, by which a majority of the actual, bona fide settlers of Kansas, shall vote through the instrumentality of impartial Judges, I will join you in all lawful opposition to their doing, and the President and Congress will reject their Constitution."

The Convention at Lecompton, Kansas, it will be remembered, had been filled largely by pro-slavery men. This was in part at least because free soil men in the territory had refused Governor Walker's plea to take part in an election for delegates held the third Monday in June, 1857. Some of those who refused to vote held that the census on which the poll lists were made was defective. Others feared that participation would indicate a recognition on their part of the pro-slavery government in the territory. They hoped to force the recognition of their illegal Topeka constitution upon Congress as California had done in 1850.

On the question as to whether the Lecompton Convention should refer the entire constitution back to the people for ratification, Hunter took the stand of most of the Southern statesmen in saying, "If the convention itself was legally constituted and elected, the quest of submitting their work to the people for ratification was one of which that body had jurisdiction alone, unless indeed the act which called them into being, had required a final ratification by the People." The

act in question was silent on the last point. There were precedents both North and South in case the Convention failed to refer the finished constitution to the electorate. But the practice of failing to do so had long fallen into disuse in the North while it was still familiar to some of the more conservative Southern States. It was to the South's advantage to take this older interpretation on the procedure of a constitutional Convention and the ultras lost no time in seizing it.

Hunter said that there probably would be no trouble over the question between himself and the President "because I do not believe for a moment that he would aid in an attempt to reject the State, if Kansas should apply for admission, merely because its Convention did not choose to submit the Constitution to the people for ratification." In other words, without having seen or talked with Buchanan, he expected that he would accept whatever came up from Kansas provided the stamp of legality was upon it. He read the signs of the times correctly. It was an application of common sense because the Democrats were in a difficult position, and the path he indicated was about the only one leading out of the woods. In his second letter he tactfully indicated that any Kansas issues would probably be temporary, and hence it would be ill advised for the Virginia Democracy to divide on them.

By the end of the month Hunter's friends were much encouraged. A. D. Banks<sup>19</sup> reported that the

opposition in the State was dead. He had also visited Washington. Cobb, and Postmaster General Brown desired Hunter's election. Floyd was reported non-committal. Buchanan indicated dissatisfaction with Hunter's first letter. A little later D. H. Wood<sup>20</sup> suggested a cause of this feeling as follows:

"You will pardon my suggestion, I hope, when I venture to say that your omission in both letters to refer to the very manly and patriotic reply of President Buchanan to the Connecticut Clergymen,<sup>21</sup> has been construed into a cold admiration on your part of its contents, or of your want of personal or political allegiance to his administration. I say the mere *absence* of approval has implied a dissent." But Toucey, Secretary of Navy, was firm in his belief of Hunter's faithfulness. He and Wood had hoped Hunter would not have publicly stated his opinion "until a proper opportunity offered on the floor of the Senate." Wise was reported as ready to cease his opposition and pull his "Enquirer" out of the fight. Hunter's election despite the sweat and labor of hostile coalitions, appeared assured.

And while the forces of Hunter and Wise moved and counter-moved at political chess in the Old Dominion, and while Walker and the Lecompton delegates came to grip on the plans of Kansas, Buchanan "seated comfortably" at the Soldiers Home worried over the reports of Robert Tyler from the City of Brotherly Love.

Soldiers' Home, October 10, 1857.

My Dear Sir:

Seated comfortably at this place preparing my message, and having just heard the favorable news from Kansas, I confess your note of yesterday, this moment brought from town, has given me much uneasiness. It is the first intimation I have ever received from any quarter that a serious doubt existed as to the success of the Democratic candidates in the city and county of Philadelphia. I cherish the hope that you have written in a moment of gloom, and that the result on next Tuesday will disappoint your apprehensions. It would be the last calamity for Philadelphia at the present moment to become a Black Republican city, and thereby throw herself into the arms of the disunionists. I shall not believe it until I see it. I am always most happy to see you.

Your friend always,

James Buchanan<sup>22</sup>

This cherishing of hope in moments of gloom appears ever so often in Buchanan's letters.

About the same time Wise wrote Buchanan a letter enclosing a note of Theodore M. Hope, an Illinois Democrat.<sup>23</sup> Hope held that Douglas was "infinitely less reliable upon the slavery question than Wm. H. Seward." After exhorting his friend Wise not to permit himself to be driven to the wall, and expressing the hope that the President's eyes would be open, he made an impassioned appeal—"In the name of

God, his (Buchanan's) friends *and the country break our chains in Illinois*. Relieve the guards——." An enclosed clipping indicated that Douglas claimed he had been slighted in the patronage, and was hostile to Virginia (Wise's aspiration).

The administration was at a critical juncture in its history. With Douglas hostile, the attitude of the Southern Democracy towards the Administration's Kansas policy was most important. Congress was not yet in session but some of the Democratic leaders who had gathered at White Sulphur Springs, Virginia, in the early summer, had talked of making war on Buchanan should he sustain Walker's utterances and course on the Kansas question. Buchanan was aware of this attitude but had not declared himself officially as to the future policy. Whether Robert Tyler also had similar information is not certain but it is highly probable. At any rate he now wrote Buchanan to delay making public his intentions as to Walker until he had consulted the other leaders of the party.

Tyler now saw in Walker a dangerous demagogue. His enemy, Forney, was taking sides with Walker, an event which unknown to any at this time, was to lead to his own political advancement.

Philadelphia November 4th (1857)

My Dear Sir

If the Convention in Kansas should now determine to send the Constitution to Congress without a popular ratification then Govr. R. J. Walker will have

precipitated suddenly & unexpectedly, either by a gross blunder or by a revolting act of treachery, a perilous issue to your Administration and the Country. In this grave exigency I have more confidence in your own experience and sound sense than in any other man's abilities or capacity for advice. I beg you to take your own course without being deterred by other people's opinions. I know all the men about you and if *you can't walk* a safe path they are hardly able to help you on.

The "Press" has gone off and out of sight, wafted by a gale of ultra Walkerism and anti-Southernism. I advised Mr Westcott yesterday to keep the paper back for a cue from Washington. I saw the Editor of the Pennsylvanian and he is willing to await advices.

I send you a curious telegraph. I presume if sent at all it was by your nephew Henry.<sup>24</sup> Between us Mr. Sickles is a dangerous person and tho' very talented is very tricky.

The Post Master genl has just disappointed me by failing to redeem his promise to appoint Mr C. I. Gibbson to a mail agency. He has appointed a fellow by the name of Henry Phillips, a Know Nothing 2 or 3 years ago, an incompetent man for the post & Mr. Daniel Beideman (a member of Select Councils) told me this morning that Zigler(?) was recommended by Phillips at the instance of the infamous Theodore Derringer because Derringer & this fellow having been confederates in various political rascalities here, it

was deemed necessary to close his lips as to these transactions—

Your friend ever

Ro: Tyler<sup>25</sup>

His Exclty

James Buchanan

Not only Robert Tyler but Buchanan's cabinet at a much earlier date had come to the conclusion that Walker had political aspirations which he was willing to push if necessary to the determent of the administration. The question was now one as to whether Walker would be sustained or dropped. If Buchanan made his nomination a test he might lose all the important support he had, the Southern moderate senators. Buchanan had long held that the power of his administration lay in his Southern-Pennsylvania alliance. This alliance he could not afford to lose to further Walker's untactful conduct of Kansas affairs, much less to aid Walker to receive the next presidential nomination.

Phila. Nov. 16. 57

My dear Mr Buchanan/

You have given me permission to write to you & to converse with you in terms of respectful freedom & I avail myself of the privilege.

Mr. Westcott told me on yesterday that Plitt says that you are resolved to *sustain* Gov. Walker. I do not know what interpretation to put on the word "sustain" in this connection. But I believe your own Official



Record on this detestable Kansas question is perfect & I trust you will do nothing which will have the effect to change, or modify or render equivocal in the slightest degree your Kansas record; & that you will sternly refuse to make an extra-official committal no matter who may come or what the pressure, to any man or set of men on a subject that may prove of such great importance, until you have personally seen Senators & ascertained their opinions. Thus while you will not regard the clamor of Southern men for Govr Walker's extermination, you will not permit, on the other hand, a feeling of generosity towards Govr. Walker or the blatant assumptions of his peculiar champions, to move you a single hair's-breadth from the safest & most effective line of policy as suggested by your own judgement. The more I reflect on the subject the stronger my impression becomes against the good faith of Govr. Walker to his cause & his friends. At any rate it seems he has chosen to assume a line of action that may possibly make a great man of him, and this outside of the Democratic Party perhaps, while it could not be for the advantage of anybody else.

To nominate Gov Walker to the Senate as an *Adn* measure, & have the nomination confirmed after a protracted & bitter contest, by the votes of the opposition, would present a disagreeable case. To nominate him to the Senate declaring the nomination *not* an *Adn* measure would do if certain of his confirmation; but should he be rejected the opposition papers & the Peculiar Champions would pronounce you an ungrate-

ful man, sold to Southern interests & wanting in nerve. Therefore it is that I have great anxiety (most likely needless) that you should reserve this whole subject to the last moment. Your own Record must be perfectly satisfactory to the *whole Party*, & your personal influence with men is I think remarkable.

Mr. Van Dyke will visit you, he tells me, in a day or two. A full & free conversation with him as to the great year 1856,—I mean preceding your nomination—will put you in possession of certain facts you may or may not already know, & will in a great measure account for my opinions & conduct on certain subjects.

Judge Campbell paid me a visit yesterday. He is evidently desirous of coming in among us again. Hurst would take service under you eagerly.

My opinions may be crude & advice worthless, & even presumptuous, but believe me always

Your devoted friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>20</sup>

His Excy

James Buchanan

The following letter shows what some historians are too prone to overlook, namely the existence of an ultra and a more moderate party at the South at this juncture. Buchanan's friends were the moderates and much of his action on the Lecompton Constitution was for the purpose of protecting his moderate group in the South from the Southern ultras who were, like the

206 ROBERT TYLER SOUTHERN RIGHTS CHAMPION  
abolitionists in the North, gaining ground by the cries  
of "bleeding Kansas."

Phila. Nov. 20, 1857

My dear Gov.

Your letter was my cue. You said in your letter that Walker's course in Kansas has strengthened the party of extremists South, but that provided Mr. Buchanan holds Walker to "a due accountability, the conduct of affairs would not be lost to us." The inference was clear that some check should be applied then upon the Walker shrieking press. Besides it was necessary to put in a word as a caveat to the Party in the State against the influence or attempt lead of that class of politicians who are more deadly opposed to you than any other in the country. I send the "Press" this morning (an extract). See the effort this paltry villain makes to break the force of your most powerful & admirable letter. Even the Herald in a measure holds water tho' affecting complaint. The truth is that Mr. Buchanan has no press in this city devoted to him. The "Press" & its clique are for the Devil against you. The *Pennsylvanian* is for you against Douglas, Cass, Buchanan & Walker, etc. but the *Editor* would prefer *Hunter & Davis* to you, could he get them. I hope to make this paper in the end a Wise organ & have reason to suppose it may be done.

Heaven forbid I should assist any enemy of yours. I value your success as my own. I send an extract from the *Herald* to verify my view as presented

in my last letter on one point. *Your letter will do.* The shape of affairs in Kansas will help you South I think—the new phase.

Why have you not said to me before that Mr. Buchanan has failed to assist you in Va.? You know what my hints have been on that head.

I have just returned from Boston today where I went last Monday to lecture before the "Columbia Association". My lecture was a great hit so they told me—about 12 or 1500 people present. After supper a complimentary banquet was given to me at the Parker House—a very elegant affair. Mr. Buchanan's health & yours were enthusiastically toasted—no one else proposed—.

I have been entirely excluded from the patronage here & can't get a friend appointed, altho on one occasion the President intervened in my behalf.

Yr. friend truly,

Ro. Tyler"

Gov. Wise

Walker left Kansas territory in the fall of 1857 and made a tour to Washington speaking against the Lecompton Convention in various Northern towns. He had a pledge of support for his nomination to United States Senate from Kansas on the part of Mr. Brown, editor of the *Herald of Freedom*, in his pocket. But the pledge was only valid in case Kansas *did not enter the Union under the Lecompton Constitution*. Walker was a wily man who knew how to play the martyr when it

208 ROBERT TYLER SOUTHERN RIGHTS CHAMPION  
suited his purpose. Trouble lay ahead and Tyler wrote  
cautioning Buchanan.<sup>28</sup>

Phila: Nov 27. 57

My dear Mr. Buchanan

I see by the Herald (letter writer) that Govr. Walker is disposed to "kick out" in regard to the Kansas Constitution, I merely desire to send you a hasty line to inform you that the Party here is a unit in support of your feeling on this question. Mr. Anderson of the Pennsylvanian says that all bitter resolutions & c about the appointments are merged in a general desire to stand by you fully & heartily. My own judgement is that the Party here desires this Kansas question to be settled; & I find everybody resolved to support you

Yr Friend ever

Ro: Tyler

His Excy

James Buchanan

Phila. Novr. 28. 57

My dear Mr Buchanan,

The People are tired of the Kansas agitation & are going to sustain *you* in an effort to settle it. I just saw Josiah Randall. He says you are right & that he is most heartily with you. So we all are.

I write to you because you permit me to enjoy your friendship; & because I know that I am your personal & political friend; & under such circumstances a

## TROUBLES WITH KANSAS

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mans *instincts* are as safe as another's experience & judgement sometimes.

If you can possibly get Gov. Walker to agree with your views in *three* days time it would be best. If not, I trust you will remove him without hesitation.

It is absurd to talk of Govr. Walker leading any party in the Democratic camps against you. The only danger & that not very great is in leaving the question an open one.

I talked this morning with David Treadwell (?) a very rich man who voted for Fillmore. He says he & *his class* wish this "nigger" excitement ended & that he is in favor of your Kansas policy.

You can address the Country in your Message & stifle all factious opposition in the North as you did with your Silliman<sup>29</sup> letter South.

ever your friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>30</sup>

His Exclty

James Buchanan

On the same day he wrote the President, Tyler sent a copy of the following enclosure to Wise. It was, of course, calculated to show the Governor that Walker would not in any way help another to attain the Presidential nomination.<sup>31</sup> It also intimated that Tyler himself would not aid Buchanan in anything which might contribute to Walker's political advancement. It will be remembered that he was a political power in eastern Pennsylvania, although that power in a great measure

depended upon the favor of Buchanan. The general information in regard to Walker corresponds to the impression the Governor gave Seward before leaving for Kansas, and to Brown of the Herald of Freedom in the fall of 1857. Buchanan's cabinet had reached much the same conclusion in the late summer of the same year. Tyler's advice to Wise not to let Hunter run for the Senate again was in vain. From what the Hunter papers indicate, Wise could not prevent Hunter's election in any event.

The following interesting note and enclosure comes from a fragmentary letter of Robert Tyler to Wise.

November 28

I send<sup>22</sup> the enclosed as a sign of the times. We have here the play of Hamlet, with the character of Hamlet omitted. Not a single word for Henry A. Wise. Should Mr. Buchanan listen to this man as utterly devoid of discretion as of principle, he is utterly lost. He will be sunk *even in Pennsylvania*. *Nous verrons*.

Yr.

Ro Tyler

Affairs in Kansas

(Correspondence of the Cincinnati Times.)

Leavenworth City, Nov. 7, 1857

George Sanders in Kansas, and his mission—  
Walker for President and Parrott for Vice President

And important political caucus is now being held in this city.

As General Scott says, I paid.....amount to ..... for the following important information:—  
George N. Sanders, late American Consul at London, arrived here a few days ago since, accompanied by a tall, long-legged, leather-cased Hungarian, and a large quantity of a little the best brandy ever taken from the custom house, or ever brought into Kansas Territory.

It was currently reported that he had come here to lay out some two hundred and fifty acres of land as an addition to this city, which he and George Law own. This, however, turns out to be a ruse. He immediately fitted up a large house, employed a couple of colored cooks, hired the finest "turn out" at a first class livery stable, went over to Leecompton and brought back Governor Walker and Secretary Stanton, who in company with General Harney, have been holding secret caucuses for a week past. George is known to be one of the best "wire-workers" and "log-rollers" in the country, and they are now maturing the plans to have Walker nominated for the Presidency in 1860, and to have his appointment as Governor of Kansas confirmed by the Senate. This caucus have discussed the probability of a "split" in the democratic party on Walker's course in Kansas, at the assembling of Congress, in which event Marcus J. Parrott, who is an old democrat, will lead the free State wing of the democratic party in Congress, and Robert J. Walker will head the North wing outside of Congress. Before 1860 Kansas and

Minnesota will have been admitted as free States, a new census will have increased the vote of the Electoral College in the free States, and the following will be the

### DEMOCRATIC TICKET FOR 1860.

For President,

ROBERT J. WALKER, of Mississippi

For Vice President

MARCUS J. PARROTT, of Kansas

If a split occurs in the democratic party on the slavery question—and from the tone of the Southern press, it is not improbable—the conservative free State men in the republican ..... will be compelled to give their support to the above ticket, which will be successful.

Buchanan in his annual message<sup>33</sup> December 8th indicated that he hoped Kansas would be speedily admitted to the Union, and thus cease to be a problem. Once in the Union, "If her constitution on the subject of slavery or any other subject, be displeasing to a majority of the people no human power can prevent them from changing it within a brief period." Buchanan had been in favor of submitting the whole constitution to the people but the convention had not seen fit to do, so and the organic act of the Territory did not require it. The President, however, held that the action on the slavery question which was to be submitted, met

with both the requirement of the enabling act and the party pledges of 1856.

If the Constitution was accepted without slavery the rights of property in slaves would already be preserved. The number, however, was small, and the courts had held that such property could be legally held in a territory. "To have summarily confiscated the property of slaves already in the Territory," said the President, "would have been an act of gross injustice, and contrary to the practice of the older States of the Union, which have abolished slavery."

Tyler lost no time in writing Wise about Buchanan's annual message and its Kansas policy which Douglas had now opposed publicly. He was evidently not sure that the Governor would remain with the administration and hence he wished to play upon his ambitions. It is important to note that he expected the slavery clause to be voted down by the coming referendum in the Territory. This conclusively shows that there was no plan to have anything else accomplished. Buchanan was in the same frame of mind. Tyler was anxious to promote Wise to the Presidency. Hence he here tried to persuade the "mercurial" Governor that the opportunities for his future advancement would be increased rather than lessened by the insurgency of Douglas.

Phil. Dec. 10, 57

My dear Gov.

I trust the President's message suits you. It

strikes me as a plain straightforward & able paper, by no means ultra on any subject. On the Kansas question his position is correct & I think satisfactory to you. Douglas has ruined himself I think; he has in all probability lost the South & will not be able to make himself in the North. Not one Democrat in a hundred in his state will go with him.

It seems to me now you have only to stand still. No ultra Southern man will do for next Pres't & I know no northern man that will suit Pa., Douglas out of the way; & *between yourself & any other Southern Conservative man* I will guarantee the State to be on our side.

What should be done persistently & with tact for the next two years is to arouse all thro the South a moral furor *to demand the next Presidential nomination*. Should Kansas come in as a Free State (under the no slavery clause) I take it for granted that the South will be conceded the nominee. Provided you are certain of Virginia we will give you the nomination, Buchanan being out of the way. I am very confident of this.

As for Gov. Walker & his faction we shall spend them up. They will amount to—bosh. In the Party they may do you mischief & I wish to drive them out of the Party. They have never thought of you except with hostility & never will. Unless Stanton, Walker & Douglas encourage a civil war in Kansas before the 21 Dec., the Constitution will be returned with the pro-slavery clause voted out of it & all will be well.

Poor Douglas is playing his last card for a Senatorial re-election & *will be whipped*.

Yr. friend,

Ro. Tyler\*\*

His Exly.

H. A. Wise.

Phil. Dec. 14, 57

My dear Sir:

Mr. Anderson, the editor of the *Pennsylvanian*, came to see me yesterday & said they were all prepared to move for you if I said so. But clearly it is premature to do so actively & it would only occasion jealousy in certain quarters. All in good time.

Now you have in my opinion only to stand still, edging South a little. Judge Douglas' remarkable "faux pas" has destroyed him beyond question if a Constitution is sent without the slavery clause estranging North & South. I see no difficulty in this State as far as you are concerned provided Mr. Buchanan will now stand neutral. The only real hostile element to you is this Forney element & that we intend driving out of the party.

I send an article from the *Herald*. There is much in it. See the *Pennsylvanian* of today as an Index of opinion in this State. I gave you my opinion of your messages in Saturday's *Pennsylvanian*.

For some reason or other my brother, John, has got a little weak about you. But I will put him right. I wrote him a strong letter yesterday in which I

assured him I intended to *sink* or swim with *you*. He has an idea that *I* have been neglected which is not the fact as I consider it.

Respectfully yr. friend,  
Rob. Tyler<sup>25</sup>

Gov. Wise.

A letter<sup>26</sup> of ex-President Tyler at this time<sup>27</sup> sets forth with marked ability the Administration point of view and indicated his cordial support of the President in his difficult situation.

Sherwood Forest, Dec. 14, 1857

My dear Robert:

The article on the subject of Kansas from the *Pennsylvanian* is very able. I presume it is from your pen. Douglas, I see, has taken ground against the Lecompton Convention, and yet nothing is plainer *than* that, by his own admission, the convention was the creature of the popular will, as far as the voting class could make it so, and that is the only standard to which we can refer. If the anarchists did not choose to vote, that was their own affair. Perhaps a submission of the entire constitution would have been desirable; but no man can say but that the only point of dispute was the slavery clause, and that being submitted would seem to settle the only point in dispute. What if the slavery matter did not exist in the case? Could the failure to submit the constitution to the people form a sufficient ground for rejection in op-

position to all the early precedents? Admitting that the constitution as presented is a mere petition, as contended for, because of the absence of the prior authority of Congress, the only question which can arise is, is the petition reasonable and ought its prayer to be granted? And this is decided by the amount of Federal numbers in Kansas, and the inquiry whether the constitution be republican in character. It is idle to look behind these questions into the enquiry whether the convention was elected by a majority vote. That is proved by the election returns; and even if a majority did not vote in fact, that does not alter the case. If they did not vote their acquiescence is fairly to be inferred. There is no other criterion to which we can refer but the results of the ballot-box.

Such are my present impressions. I shall, however, look to the debates, and be edified accordingly. I see no such difficulty in adjusting the dispute as that a spirit of patriotism might not overcome it in a week; but, alas! I fear that anarchy is the order of the day, and that the future will make confusion only worse confounded.

Your affectionate father,  
John Tyler

Phila. Dec: 16. 57

My dear Sir,

I have just seen Govr. Packer. The room was crowded by the "unterrified, who wish to serve the

Country"; but he was kind enough to invite a quarter of an hours private conversation.

He is going to Baltimore & from thence to Washington. He wishes to see you. I advised him to do so by all means. He wished to know at what hour he should call. I told him I thought you would see him at any reasonable hour whatever. He goes with you on the Kansas Policy of your Message, & speaks of his being in perfect harmony with you. I advised him to maintain this relation at all hazards. I am quite sure he has had leanings towards Douglass for the Presidency, & I am not sure he does not entertain some hankering in the same direction, provided things can be brought to bear. He wished to know whether, in the event of a miscarriage on the 21st Dec. in Kansas or a large opposition vote manifested by some means, or a small vote for the Constitution some means of pacification might not be devised by Congress. I told him this might be so possibly *under the immediate auspices of the Adn. but not otherwise*. I thought any senator or Member who proposed a step calculated to interfere with the proceedings of the Constitutional Convention before the 21st Dec. would be sacrificed by the National Democracy & the Southern Democracy acting with perfect unanimity;—if afterwards (should the Slave clause be voted in) he would be crushed by the Southern States. That I saw no hope of a peaceful adjustment except *to trust to the President*. Whatever was best to do he had more power to do than any other man.

I see some of the Black Republican papers talk about violence in Kansas by Jim Lane & others. Mr. Seward & his Papers talk about Civil War. I would (with all respect) give these gentlemen to understand there could be & should be no Civil War. There might be a man or two hung but no Civil War.

ever your friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>38</sup>

His Excy & c

Packer finally sided with Douglas. Later Robert Tyler, as head of the administration Democrats of Pennsylvania, had to make war on the governor which he did in public letters. Packer was more or less criticised for his way of disposing of certain public improvements in Pennsylvania.

On the same day<sup>39</sup> Senator Bigler also wrote from Philadelphia urging the President to use his influence to have the people of Kansas vote on the slavery clause. He urged Buchanan to let himself be understood on this point. The Chester County Papers, the Senator reported, would support the Administration.

Jim Van Dyke, another well-known Philadelphia lieutenant, wrote on the 21st that he hoped to have Judge Lewis formerly of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania preside at the meeting if Buchanan had no objections.<sup>40</sup> The Judge was a most highly respected and popular figure. He was a friend of Forney's who was now in a state of insurgency against the adminis-



tration. Buchanan evidently approved because the Judge presided. He delivered a very able speech in defense of the administration policy. Part of it is given below.

"On the 19th of February, 1857, the Territorial Legislature of Kansas passed a law providing for the election of delegates to a Convention, to meet on the first Monday of September, for the purpose of framing a Constitution preparatory to admission into the Union. Delegates were elected under this law, and they assembled in convention and framed a Constitution. The convention, by a close vote, decided to submit the provisions respecting slavery to the people, and directed an election to be held for that purpose on the 21st of the present month. Thus the people, by their representatives, proceeded 'in their way'. The result of the election has not reached us. What new aspect the case may ultimately present, it is impossible at this moment to foresee. But the President proposes to abide the results of that election and admit Kansas into the Union at once under the Constitution thus framed. What objection can there be to this? All will agree that the affairs of Kansas have already occupied too much of the nation's time and attention. The sooner we clothe that unfortunate Territory with the powers of a State, and thus localize the slavery question, the better for Kansas and the better for the Union. But it is objected that the whole Constitution ought to have been submitted to the people, and not the slavery question alone. The answer to this is that neither the Act of

Congress nor the Act of the Territorial Legislature required the convention to submit the Constitution, or any part of it, to the people. If the delegates of their own accord thought proper to take the opinion of their constituents on the slavery question, it does not follow that they were bound to submit every other question. As they acted within the scope of their powers derived from the people, the presumption is that they had good reasons for the course which they thought proper to pursue. They knew, that a portion of the population were in open rebellion against the law under which they were acting, and would oppose *any* Constitution which they might frame; and they also, doubtless, knew that their constituents, who were supporting law and order, were satisfied with every provision of the Constitution, except that which had relation to slavery. This was submitted, because there was an honest difference of opinion about it. It is complained that the people cannot vote on the slavery question without voting for the Constitution. This is mere matter of form, because the other provisions of the Constitution, are not intended to be submitted to the people. Their voice is already expressed through their delegates. The Constitution, with the exception of the slavery clause, was framed by their representatives, to be submitted to Congress, where the legal and ultimate sovereignty undoubtedly at present resides. It is further objected that the Legislature which authorized the election of delegates was not legally elected. It is sufficient for us to know that it is the only Legislature which has

ever been acknowledged by the Government of the United States—that it is the Legislature defacto; and, until its powers are revoked or annulled by Congress, its acts must be treated as valid. It is also complained that the delegates who framed the Constitution were not voted for by a majority of the people. The answer to this is that all the people had a right to vote and those who declined to exercise that right have no just cause to complain. The call was made by the only Government known to exist. The people had an ample opportunity to vote for representatives to frame a Constitution, and thus they had tendered to them the usual rights of popular sovereignty. If they desired more, they should have demanded it at the hands of their Territorial Legislature. Failing in this, they should have influenced the action of their Constitutional Convention. If that action does not suit them, they can amend their Constitution in a very short time after their admission. In no view of the case does it appear to me to be proper that the whole nation should be disturbed continually with what is properly a merely local question. Let Kansas be admitted at once, and then let her settle this question for herself. The largest privilege of popular sovereignty is conceded to her when she is admitted as a State on an equal footing with the other states. Any course which would hold her any longer in the helpless and distracted condition of a Territory must surely be anything but a fair extension of the privilege of popular sovereignty.”<sup>41</sup>

Each member of the cabinet sent a letter. They

were read by Tyler, and appeared in papers. Cass stressed the fact that Kansas speedily admitted would bring peace to the Union. Others held that the slavery question was submitted to the people which act was in accord with the party pledges of 1856. The opposition of the Republicans for political effects was fully stressed. Toucey closed his letter with the sensible and well known principle of State Sovereignty as it would be applicable to Kansas saying, “As to all other abstract or practical questions, outside of that issue, properly subject to the action of a state, there neither had been, nor was likely to be, any great difficulty, as it would remain with the sovereign State of Kansas to dispose of them according to its own Sovereign will and pleasure.” This statement would amply cover the contention that the few slaves in the territory were protected by another portion of the Constitution not submitted and which by the constitution could not be amended until 1864.<sup>42</sup>

Robert Tyler recounted the meeting<sup>43</sup> and other news items to Wise on the 29th. (On the side edge 2nd sheet) (The Democrats of Detroit are going to hold a quiet Anti-Douglas meeting).

Phila. Dec. 29, 57.

My dear Sir:

You will perceive by reference to the Pennsylvanian of yesterday, that we had an overwhelming demonstration here in favor of the Adm. as against Douglas & Co. We have succeeded I think, in prostrating the

Bolding opposition here. Judge Lewis presided. By the way he informed me the night of the meeting that he & Richd Vaux, the Mayor of this city & some others wished to visit Richmond the 22d Feby, & begged me to accompany him, I think it probable I shall do so.

Gov. Packer wishes to be as quiescent on the Kansas issue as possible. The . . . . . now is that my friend . . . . . is to the Attorney Genl. of the State. He is well inclined to you for I have talked with him on the subject, a day or two ago. The "Press is friendly" . . . . to Hunter & "The South."

The arrest of General Walker by Com. Paulding will make a stir . . . . . I should think.

You are quite right to stand still where you are now. You have made a good position North on the Kansas question & by your Know-nothing victory. Just now the extreme Southern party have the vantage ground but the day of reaction will come again. The Country here perfectly understands your & Hunter's relative positions. As between you there will be no halting with any. Take care of Virginia & the South.

Yr friend, try  
Ro Tyler<sup>44</sup>

Hex'ly H. A. Wise

— On the same day Tyler also wrote Buchanan as follows:

Philada Dec. 29, 57

My dear Sir.

Jayne's Hall was crowded last evening. Judge

Lewis presiding was a good scout. Judge Parsons was also present as a V: President I think. The effort has been made here by the Douglassites thro Forney (?) & others to produce the impression that Packer was against you. The public mind knowing the excessive intimacy between Judge Lewis & Parsons & Packer is getting satisfied of having been led into error.

Mr Bright read a good speech. Mr Willes (?) spoke without sufficient preparation. Mr. Van Dyke read the Resolutions which are good, & I seconded the Resolutions as well as I could do under the circumstances, having had only thirty six hours to "fix up."

Major Caringru (?), G M Spartan (so written over it is difficult) (a very amiable man) & Smith of Tennessee followed with good speeches.

Altogether the affair is very telling & will stop the current of disaffection. *A judicious arrangement of the Patronage & favors of the govt is needed here.* I will do myself the pleasure and honor of conversing with you on this subject, when I see you

ever your friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>45</sup>

His Exy

James Buchanan

Van Dyke<sup>46</sup> also reported the meeting to Buchanan as a big affair. He also wrote that a desperate attempt was being made to lead the people astray. The Douglas faction was trying to convince the public that Packer was on their side. "The meeting," declared

Tyler, "rallied the party. The hope was that the voters would accept the Lecompton Constitution. Even if slavery was accepted the people could change it when the territory became a state." If not then, when could they? It would be beneficial, he agreed with Buchanan, to have the matter settled before 1860.

At this juncture Tyler's hopes to elevate Wise to the presidency were doomed for a severe disappointment for Wise, like Douglas, and Forney, bolted the administration. It will be shown in subsequent letters that his real reason for this action lay in his unwillingness to cut loose from Douglas. Wise evidently thought he ought to keep his chariot hitched to the man whom he considered the most powerful Northern star.

Phila. Jany 12. 58

My dear Sir,

Have you read Gov Wise's extraordinary letter? I confess it has filled me with chagrin. Mr Forney—and the whole tribe have gone in ecstasies over it. I have constantly & anxiously endeavoured to impress on Gov Wise the necessity of a close & steady support of your Adn, and you are aware of the great importance I have always attached to Gov Wise's support of yr Adn. He is the most formidable man in opposition I have ever known; & opposition is his natural element. Some screw has evidently got loose. I find that the friend of one of your men of Genius like Gov. Wise occupies about the same position in reference to him that the keeper of a Lunatic does to his Patient—If he leaves

him alone five minutes ten to one he tries to cut his own throat or somebody else's.

I am always ready under such circumstances as at present exist for a square fight a l'outrance. I would compel gentlemen to take ground openly—either to follow my Banner or to oppose the Adn unequivocally. No man should stab me while whispering words of personal kindness & compliments in my ear. I believe fortiter in re, you can whip them all; and even if the Combination be more formidable than we suspect you still have the main Party & its organization behind you, & three years before you I would not yield an inch to save their lives.

Yr friend ever

Ro: Tyler<sup>47</sup>

His Exly

James Buchanan

A letter of January 11th to Tyler indicated that Wise was about to go off on a political tangent from the administration's Kansas policy. "My letter to New York," wrote the governor, "is in exact correspondence with my letter of November, and it differs from Douglas in doctrine, and in both the end and means of maintaining popular sovereignty, and doesn't conflict with Mr. Buchanan, unless I have greatly misunderstood him, except about domestic institutions. I urge adherence to him and his administration, but he must allow me to assign my own reasons and adopt my own cause. If Douglas's plan is best, it is an intervening

plan by Congress which denies the legitimacy of the Lecompton constitution. Mine allows the constitution to be legitimate but as it is deemed as a fact submitted to the people, it allows the territory itself to have a full and fair vote upon it. I am determined that neither the Democratic party nor slavery shall be injured irreparably by warding over the doctrine of popular sovereignty, and incurring against us a majority not only of the territory, but of every state in the union. I want to cure the egregious blunders of the pro-slavery blind leaders. I have the sympathy in this of the Virginia Democracy, and you will see it. And the administration, I expect, will be saved in part by the course I am committed to and mean most steadily to pursue."<sup>48</sup>

On the 17th Wise wrote another letter<sup>49</sup> to Tyler in much the same strain. "You are misled," he declared to Tyler, "and causing the President to be deceived. If Congress adopts that Lecompton schedule," he continued, "the Democracy is dead." He declared his own position was independently and deliberately taken, and that he would stand by it. "The administration may take the slightest step aside if it will, and aid me in my cause. I cannot and will not take a step backwards. The game of the disunionists, he believed, is to drive off every northern Democrat from Mr. Buchanan in the Kansas question, and they will succeed unless the President alters his conclusions very soon. "Walker, Douglas, and Forney<sup>50</sup> are all

nothing to me." Wise declared, "I wish to save the administration."

But in spite of Wise's ardent zeal to save Tyler and the administration, neither they nor the Democratic party for the most part cared to accept his method or the cries of political salvation. Tyler urged Buchanan not to yield, and said he had heard Wise was going to break with Forney. In February Wise wrote a public letter to Forney<sup>51</sup> denouncing the Lecompton constitution and denying that it would bring peace to the country if accepted by Congress. Had Wise been a declared Republican, he could not have served their cause better than at this time. His action arose from no such intent but political hopes and calculations depended upon the maintenance of friendly relations between the administration, Douglas and himself. He no doubt hoped that Buchanan later would be convinced that he, Wise, had taken the better course. He was later indignant to find that his action put him outside Buchanan's chosen circle.

Tyler's opinion of Wise and Packer at this time are seen in the following letter:

Phila: Jan'y 26 (no date)

My dear Sir

We are having a very smart contest here on the question of the Judgeship. I rather think the chances are *against* Porter. It is, however, hard to speak with anything like certainty. It is my conviction that we shall sustain you fully & unqualifiedly. I have said to

Baker, Westcott & others that I cared little or nothing about the Judgeship only to select men to sustain your hand first, & in the State Convention afterwards. They are full of dislike for the Porters; & I rather think the delegates, most of them, will be for Stanwood (?) but of course this is uncertain. You see the scolding you gave me once makes me very diplomatic!

I am of opinion that Gov. Packer is getting nervous at the idea of being considered disposed to split off from Yr. Adm. I do not believe *he* has any malice; but there are some bad men around him.

I see the Senate Committee is with you on the Fillibustering question. So far, well,

*Gov. Wise, I fear, is mischievously inclined.* This strictly *entre nous*.

Yr friend ever

Ro: Tyler<sup>52</sup>

His Ecly

James Buchanan

Phila: Jany 27 (no date)

My dear Mr Buchanan

The enclosed Article from the Pennsylvanian, corroborates my statement of yesterday

I believe it to be substantially correct.

Yr friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>53</sup>

His Ecly

James Buchanan

Buchanan continued steadily in his intention to accept whatever returns came from Kansas in the slavery referendum. He decided to submit the Le-compton constitution and the return of the vote "with slavery" to Congress on February 2nd. His disgust with the failure of the free state people in Kansas to co-operate with his hope for a peaceful adjustment of their difficulties was very evident. It was also evident that he was very anxious to have Kansas become a state and thus have the whole question where it could no longer concern federal politics. He was much worried over the rumors of conventions to discuss secession in Georgia and other southern states. It was just such movements led by southern radicals which were undermining his administration in that section. Continued agitation was also vitally weakening the Democratic party in the north. The Republicans, likewise, knew these facts and many rejoiced in them. Douglas had bolted, and the great triangular battle was on.

Evidently Tyler also had written words of encouragement concerning conditions in Philidelphia, and Buchanan, now fighting his enemies on every side with thoroughness and vigor, discussed the realignment of the patronage in the good city of Brotherly Love and the Kansas problem. Indeed, the Executive seemed quite hopeful.

To R. Tyler

Washington, February 15, 1858.

My Dear Sir:

Many thanks for your kind favor of the 12th. I agree with you; it is quite necessary that all the Federal officers in Philadelphia should be a unit in action. Without this, they neutralize the administration and leave it powerless. I desire to recognize the wing of the party to which M John Miller belongs, and like him personally. I have thought of Dr. Sturgeon's place for him. What think you of it?

The Kansas question brightens daily. Everybody with the least foresight can perceive that, Kansas admitted, and the Black Republican party are destroyed; whilst Kansas rejected, and they are rendered triumphant throughout the Northern States. Besides, above all, I very much fear that the fate of the Union is involved. How I do mourn over Wise and his defection! Would to Heaven I could have avoided this heart-felt wound.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler and my little favorites, believe me to be always very respectfully, your friend,

James Buchanan<sup>54</sup>

Two days later Mayor Vaux<sup>55</sup> of Philadelphia also reported favorable trends in the Quaker City. On March 1st Van Dyke sent a pro-administration resolution which he had prepared. Meanwhile in order to lessen the difficulties at Washington, Senator Toombs,

at the suggestion of Buchanan, reported from a Democratic caucus a proviso that nothing in the act admitting Kansas as a state should "abridge or infringe the right of the people at all times to alter, reform or abolish their form of government in such manner as they may think proper."<sup>56</sup> This was a repetition of Buchanan's statement that Kansas would be absolutely free of outside interference after she became a state. As such it was but a constitutionalism truism, but was seemingly of value in quieting the apprehensions of the untrained public.

While Buchanan "mourned"<sup>57</sup> over the defection of Wise, he was inevitably drawn towards Hunter. Hunter also welcomed the English Bill as a way to peace. His position in so critical a time evidently caused Buchanan to overlook old shortcomings, and he became a more frequent visitor at the White House, until 1861.

The following letter from William W. Crump of Richmond who was trying to bring about friendly relations between Floyd and Hunter is representative of the feeling in Virginia on the Kansas question:

Richmond, February 3, 1858

My Dear Sir:

Amid the universal applause and congratulations of the wise and just which your last message will evoke, I do not know but that it may seem presumptuous in me to express to you my sense of the grateful admir-

ation which filled my breast as I read its clear and comprehensive statements, to its powerful and persuasive argumentation and to its affectionate and manly and patriotic appeals.

You will pardon me, I trust, if in the flow of sentiment it has inspired, I have been made to forget that you are only the President, and to feel that a clearer and kindlier tie unites us, as your words of fraternal counsel and of earnest and spirit stirring entreaty fell upon my ears. I cannot doubt but that angry elements of faction and of strife, will subside before the presence of one who rebukes them in the language of the Republican fathers in the language of reason, of truth, and of patriotism.

But if unhappily the demon of discord will not be stilled, and a severed union and hostile sections and civil war shall dishonor our forefathers—desecrate the fabric reared by their toil and cemented by their blood and devastate our teeming fields and redden our hearth-stones; however much your heart may sadden and may sicken at the spectacle, you cannot reproach yourself, posterity will not reproach you for not admonishing and imploring your countrymen to forget their dissensions, to bury their feuds, and to stand firmly and safely by the constitution and the Union.

The obligation which we of the south are under to you whatever betides us, can never be forgotten. Your heroic vindication of our constitutional rights is without a parallel in our history, for no statesman whose personal interest and affiliations were north, has ever

been subjected to the terrible ordeal through which you have triumphantly passed. While a tongue or a pen remains to us to preserve in tradition, or to embalm in history the memory of your disinterested and exalted conduct, be assured that your name will be a "household word" among us.

We do not hope—the intelligent among us have never hoped—to perpetuate slavery in Kansas. It is plain to us and has long been that an overwhelming majority are against us there. But it only makes the outrage more wanton and atrocious; that they will not exercise their power legitimately, but perversely and ungenerously and insultingly persist in crushing us, without and against law. This will not be borne I sincerely believe. Our people are pretty incensed and here, as at the north, the aggressive agents are most active and most potential. The conservative—those who calculate the cost and in the end will be most willing to make the sacrifice if it cannot be avoided—look with eager expectation upon your efforts to yet believe they will be successful in preserving the union and harmony of the states. But I meant not to discuss the subject, but in writing you to express my thanks to you for your generous defense of our rights, I fear that I have expressed them, perhaps too warmly, but I have followed my instincts in what is written, and will not rewrite. I expect and desire no answer, but I could not



forbear the expression of grateful sentiments with which I am,

Sincerely, your friend,  
William W. Crump.<sup>58</sup>

Although Governor Wise had refused to follow Buchanan's decision to make the vote on Lecompton a test question, he had strong hopes that their personal friendship might continue. On March 22nd, he wrote the President a letter in which he expressed regret that he had had to differ with Buchanan on the Kansas question. He still held that the support of that measure would mean "the death of Buchanan and the Democracy." Floyd had been at Richmond, and by the letter one concludes Wise had invited Buchanan to come with Floyd and be a guest at his house. Mr. Hughes had also added to Floyd's message for Buchanan, but Wise suggested that Buchanan "call off his dogs." Evidently Wise had been included among those who had to be admonished for their wanderings.

Ex-President Tyler wrote<sup>59</sup> to a friend in April that the rejection of the Kansas Bill by the House and its adoption of the Crittenden amendment, which would have sent the constitution back to Kansas for another vote, to be a "sad result for Mr. Buchanan". It would seem to hold out to him the prospect of a troubled term, and would "render desperate" any aspirations for a second term if he had any.

To the Wise defection came a local defeat to harrass Robert Tyler.

Phila: May 5th 1858

My dear Sir,

I believe I have not mentioned to you that Judge Cadwalader had offered me the clerkship of the U. S. District Court. I declined his offer as a matter of course under the circumstances. Since his return from Washington he has given me certain hints of a conversation he had the honor to hold with you in which my name was utter'd. I do not know precisely what his kindness led him to say; but I desire to observe that neither my excellent friend Cadwalader nor any other has ever been authorised by me, directly or indirectly, to place me in the position of an applicant for, or expectant of office at your hands. I say this now in order to avoid all misconception. There is no man (except my Father) for whom I entertain greater regard & respect than I do for yourself, but I am distinctly my own master & no office-seeker; and well knowing what is due (notwithstanding my Gorgan's head of debt & Poverty) to my name, education & antecedents, I ignore & absolutely repudiate the idea of being an expectant of official favors from any man. When I have succeeded in discharging, as well as I may be able, what I conceive to be my own obligations, public & private, I cannot consent to look an inch further; & while I am by no means insensible to political honors & advancement I do not want them unless they come to me unsolicited & unquestioned.

Pardon me my great & respected Friend for this little piece of egotism, but I have been always, per-

fectly frank in the relations you have permitted me to assume with you; & not knowing exactly what may have passed in the conversation to which I have referred & feeling a little nervous on the subject, I have thought it best to be thus explicit.

The Municipal Election has gone heavily against us. There are 7000 votes less for Vaux in '58" than he received in '56 & 11000 less than you had in this City. These rascals & vagabonds were a load we could not carry & notwithstanding the result it will in the end be to your advantage. I send extracts from the papers. You will see at once the true cause of our defeat. *National Politics had nothing to do with this business*

with perfect respect  
ever your friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>60</sup>

His Exclty

James Buchanan

From the quiet of Sherwood Forest came thoughts of other days by the venerable Ex-President and concern for the welfare of John Tyler, Jr.

Sherwood Forest  
June 3. 1858

Dear Robert:

Your letter of the 27th May is before me—enclosing the articles from the Herald on Col. Bentons opinions of the Administration. Of what consequence

his opinions may be to his blood relatives I know not, but they undoubtedly have no influence over the public mind—I do not believe that any man who had play'd a prominent part in the politics of his own times, ever had less of the public sympathy in life, or was less lamented in death—He seems to have left the world under the belief that his works viz. his thirty years in the Senate & c were to survive him through long years;—but I believe they will almost accompany him to the grave and be buried and forgotten with him—I have never read them—He was so prolix, and at the same time unreliable, from his excessive egotism and ill-regulated antipathies, that I would as soon undertake a journey through the dismal swamp as to wade through his ponderous folios—A friend, two summers ago, called my attention to his second Vol. of the thirty years—I turned over the leaves and finding that while he had given to the administrations of Mr. Van Buren, Polk, Taylor and Fillmore a mere passing notice he had devoted to my times more than the half of his ponderous volume, I closed the book without reading it and returned it to my friend with the expression—“I see that the Col: has paid me a very high compliment in giving me so large a space in his book, but I have neither leisure or inclination to read it”—He doubtless aspired to the Presidential succession after Mr Van Buren—and when the Democratic Convention of 1844 ruled Mr. Van Buren off, because of his having thrown himself on the drawn sword of the administration on the Texas question,

Col. Benton shared the same fate—

John's letter is a capital one— On a return trip from Norfolk on Saturday last I found Genl Taliferro on board the Boat, who adverted to it with the remark that it was a model of a style which deserved (sic) to be imitated, "brief sententious and forceable." It was published in the Norfolk Herald— I have not seen it in other Southern prints— I believe however that it has had an extensive circulation throughout the Country. What is he to do? The people in Washington seem to be resolv'd (sic) to give him nothing and I am much concern'd about him— That a man of his fine talents and accomplishments should not be able to earn his daily bread, or should fail to set about the task of doing so, is to me incomprehensible— I had rather see him following the plough, than doing nothing; and yet I feel persuaded that all the honors and emoluments of the profession are before him, if he would but pursue it steadily— His course is an enigma which I cannot solve—

I am glad that your family is blessed with health You represent yourself as unwell. Take a dose of Calomel and lie by for a day, and all will be well—I have a great desire to see your boy— My health is improving, but I have still many aches and pains the result of the last winters sickness— Being without an overseer I have of necessity to pursue an active course of life so far as I am able—All the rest are well

inclusive of Countis and Pattie Tyler, who are still with us—

With love to all  
Yr Father

John Tyler<sup>61</sup>

Ro: Tyler Esqr

Buchanan's friends, however, were fairly happy over their deliverance from the Kansas issues. The President himself felt he had saved his organization and averted dangerous moves toward secession. If he had lost the support of Douglas and his unstable following in Illinois, had he not gained the active support of Senator Jefferson Davis, the redoubtable hero of Buena Vista, and did he not still have the unshaken loyalty of the tireless and determined Senator John Slidell, ruler of the Southwest. The "Constitution," more or less official Washington organ of the administration ran editorials on the triumphs of the administration and Robert Tyler reviewed in like happy strain its successes in a public letter to the Democratic brethern of Philadelphia on July 4th.

Bristol, Buck Co., Pa.

Gentlemen:

I regret that other . . . . . engagements deny me the pleasure of being present on the occasion of your proposed celebration of the approaching Fourth of July in Independence Square, and I can only return you my best thanks for your kind invitation. Your meeting

will occur under circumstances of peculiar propriety both as regards Time and Place. There is no National party in the country except the National Democratic Party. It seems that the Fundamental Laws of the Union have become insupportable to all other political organizations. It would really appear even that a majority of the people of the United States had become dissatisfied with our plan of govt. It is quite certain that immense masses of our fellow-citizens are bent on converting the govt. into a sectional and social tyranny by prostrating the laws of the land and the plainest principles of the Constitution, . . . . and by repudiating all national (interest) and sentiments as unworthy . . . . modern . . . . statesmanship. In the midst of all . . . . dreadful confusion and perversities of the day, the Democratic Party alone on its Faith and Acts bears the proved and glorious badge of nationality and is consequently in the very necessity of the case, the only rightful custodian of the Types, Emblems, Evidences, and Records which attest the origin and development of our national life. No one then can question the exceeding appropriateness of the occasion and the place of your proposed meeting.

I cannot close without adverting for a moment to the distinguished success which has attended the National Admn. so far in the conduct of public affairs. It is true the Admn. has had to struggle in its first year with the painful effects of a sudden and overwhelming financial and business revulsion for which it cannot be held in any way responsible. It has also been obliged

to assume and defend certain political issues in a manner to affect in some degree the integrity of our Party. But the worst in these respects has happily passed without any serious ill consequences and the present and future are full of encouragement. The Kansas question has been happily localized and adjusted on a principle that has subjugated all rebellious associations and proceedings in the territories and compelled a peaceful and united people to enact their resolves of govt., not in treasonable contempt of, but in strict subordination to, the laws and authority of the United States. The Utah revolt has been quelled, and the lost power of the Govt. fully restored in that Territory without bloodshed and the atrocious . . . . of Mormonism, it is hoped, will be driven out of the U. States. The ports of the Republic have been closed against fillibustering expeditions to Central America, while the strong hand of the govt. is busily and effectively engaged in securing and consolidating American interests in that quarter. And last, tho not least, the British Govt., through its recognized organs of their Cabinet and the Parliament, has distinctly affirmed the American principle on the disputed subject of visit and search and has promptly made amplest reparation in all cases . . . .

. . . . of Washington in 1842 is now satisfied and confirmed by open Parliamentary and diplomatic declarations, so that this vexed issue between the two govts. may now be regarded as distinctly and finally settled. In all this we have just cause for pleasure . . .

and triumph. Before us too, are questions in connection with Mexico, Cuba, and Central America whose national importance can hardly be measured—questions in the presence of which the narrow disputes of domestic factions ought not to be able to command a moment's attention in their miserable insignificance. I have no doubt that the great patriot and statesman at the head of the govt. will prove himself fully equal to all the demands which the Power, the Honor, and the Commerce of this nation may make upon him.

Very respectfully

Yr. friend, etc.

Robt. Tyler<sup>62</sup>

The summer of 1858 was a difficult time for Buchanan's friends and allies in Pennsylvania and the North. Tyler stood manfully by the guns. Indeed, he wrote Buchanan that only his regard for his father exceeded his respect for Buchanan. Mayor Vaux complained of the lack of party discipline and of the outcry of the Forney clique. Forney, it will be remembered, was now bitterly fighting Buchanan and Tyler through the columns of his "Press" which he had set up in Philadelphia a few months before. Because of Forney's course in the Kansas question the "Press" now had to live without any government printing. In May Tyler wrote that the party's troubles in Philadelphia were not due to national politics. In June Thomas Tyler wrote Wise a very frank letter which gave a

clear picture of the political aspects of the governor's attitude in the Kansas question.

Philadelphia

July 20, 1858

My Dear Governor:

You seem to think that I wished you to renounce or abandon *Principle*. Perhaps I am the last man on Earth to advise any such thing. Surely, prudence is not inconsistent with principle, and one may exhibit caution, tact, management and wisdom and yet remain as true as steel to his principles. Do not understand me as having advised you to abnegate your anti-Leocompton views or your peculiar ideas in application of Territorial "Popular Sovereignty." It is true your opinions on this subject do not accord with my own views of a system of comprehensive Democratic statesmanship, but I have no doubt of the depth and honesty of your convictions. I thought I saw an opportunity occur where you might, by proper management in despite of the criticisms of your opponents, fully restore yourself to the very strong position you occupied before your Tammany letter made its appearance. It was simply to take the ground of treating the English Bill as a *finality*—to declare that while the Bill did *not* meet your personal wishes that it *was the act of the Party*—from which you did not choose to combat, and that under the circumstances you could regard it as a *finality in a party sense*. Had you done this your rival aspirants would have been vexed to their hearts, and

your friends everywhere would have shouted with approbation. I wished you to avoid the very contest in which you now find yourself engaged with the administration and the Democratic party in most of the states while attempting to defend Mr. Douglas in the desperate course he has taken in Illinois.

I know not, however, why I should fret and scold except that I am your true friend and that I have had no small share of feeling, to say nothing of personal interest in the whole of this friendship.

If the success of Mr. Douglas in Illinois is *necessary* to you and Virginia, I can, of course, understand your policy, but if you can stand in Virginia on your own merits (as I suspect and *hope* you can), then I repeat that *the last thing you should desire is Douglas's election*, and you should never have permitted yourself to be drawn into a new quarrel with the administration in his or any other man's behalf.

I write in order that you may distinctly comprehend my meaning. My view is: If Douglas be elected, he and the anti-Lecomptonists all set up for *him* and leave you in the lurch. If he be defeated, then the probability is they all must come to you, and *will* come if you carry Virginia. Then if you stand aloof and gradually work your way into the party organization, especially if it became the interest or pleasure of the President to aid you, *as might be the case*, you would stand in an extra-ordinary position of strength. But I do not think you can ever succeed so long as you deem it necessary to wage war on the President and the

general Party. If this be not common sense (though hastily and bunglingly expressed), I am an ass. Believe that I shall always rejoice in your prosperity and success.

Your very truly,  
Thomas Tyler<sup>63</sup>

About the same time Robert Tyler wrote of a plan to have a mass meeting at which Attorney-general Black would be invited to speak. Economic conditions were evidently unsatisfactory as Black was "expected" to state the administration's position on the troublesome tariff question.

I have treated of the Douglas-Buchanan feud in more detail in another place.<sup>64</sup> In Illinois there was a three-cornered fight featuring Lincoln, Douglas, and the forces of the administration. Douglas was returned to the Senate due to a number of "hold overs" in the Illinois legislature.

Cobb summed up conditions in midsummer in a letter to Hunter. "The political news from the North is favorable. The greatest trouble will be in Illinois, produced by Douglas' course, and in Pennsylvania on account of the tariff. The slavery excitement appears to be over. The result of the vote in Kansas cannot seriously effect the counts." Governor Denver, wrote Cobb, had found strongest slavery men and anti-slavery men for admission and vice-versa. The decision, Denver reported, would turn upon other

points such as their own ability to support the state government, etc.<sup>65</sup>

Phila: Sept. 13. 58

My dear Sir,

The ludicrous failure of the "Fusion" in New York has somewhat invigorated us here so far as the *Congressional* Districts are concerned. A "straight" ticket has been arranged both for Landy's<sup>66</sup> & Phillips's Districts, & altho *the odds are still against both* it is probable that both may succeed. Landy's chance is the best of the two. Our friends have great confidence in Col: Florence's triumph.

Our County ticket will be beat, & I wish I could indulge in any well grounded hopes of the State Canvass. George Woodward thinks Porter will be elected and he (Porter) also appears to expect a triumph. I do not. We shall not elect more than seven members of the Legislature from this City. Had not Robert Ewing been swindled out of his nomination by the set of professional political thieves here we should have swept the Board in Phila. most likely.

Judge Douglass is making a desperate struggle in Illinois. Should he succeed I fear an extensive disorganization in the Democratic Party. Should he be beat I see afterwards no difficulty. Any Sounthern Le-compton man who supports him should be flayed alive! Some of those men are filling me with inexpressible disgust by an exhibition of shameless profligacy. Like children too, they would pull down the fender

which saves them from the fire. Unfortunately our Democratic Institutions I fear are breeding a swarming multitude of smart politicians but very few statesmen while the great masses prefer demagoguism whose small & mean expedients they can understand to real statesmanship which they cannot comprehend except in its fruits grown to perfection perhaps after a man is dead & buried.

I feel confident that you will put your assailants & enemies under foot, but take my word for it, & you know I am no miserable flatterer, if you end as you have begun, your administration will be a noble & glorious one. You have traversed a road full of snares & pitfalls, thorns & rocks & you have not faltered. The rage of faction & popular clamor will yet acknowledge you thus.

Your friend ever

Ro: Tyler

His Exclly

James Buchanan

By October Governor Wise<sup>67</sup> was ready for a little spat with the President. According to rumor, Wise said, Postmaster-general Brown had remarked that Buchanan and Wise were not such good friends as formerly. This remark was resented by Wise who reminded Buchanan that he had invited him to visit his home. Perhaps the governor wanted it to appear that a breach in friendship had come at the desire of the President, so he could place himself in a defensive

position and not be blamed for the rupture. If so, Buchanan was not to be caught, for in his reply he expressed regret that they had differed in the Kansas policy, but might still remain friends. Buchanan tried to indicate that Brown had probably not said what Wise attributed to him.

Wise countered in a few days,<sup>68</sup> and said that Brown had made the remark. He also wrote that his foes were saying that he, Wise, was in Buchanan's ill favor. He also asked Buchanan why the Union (Washington) which he claimed was the President's organ did not cease attacking him. If Douglas had aided the Black Republicans, now the administration was aiding the Black Republicans to beat Douglas. Douglas' success without the Administration's aid would be a rebuke to it. Kansas would come back and Buchanan would have to let her in. The governor also prophesied an attack would be made on Buchanan when he returned to his old friends.

While Wise might write letters on broken friendship to Buchanan, he was said to have been a strong abettor of Douglas in the 1858 campaign. John Savage wrote in 1860.<sup>69</sup>

"During the great Illinois campaign of 1858, Governor Wise wrote a most hearty and enthusiastic letter, cheering on the Democracy for Douglas, and would have gone personally into the struggle, but for the duties of state and the still more tender duties of family which kept him in Richmond."

To the faithful Robert the President wrote the following letter.

Washington, October 3, 1858

My Dear Sir:

I have received your favor of the first instant. You have indeed performed your entire duty as chairman of the State Committee. Whatever may be the result of the election, you may feel proudly conscious that none of your predecessors have written addresses equal to your own. Indeed, they have been marked by signal ability and excellent good sense. I am sorry you have been so badly sustained.

Mr. W has been treated very leniently, and this according to my wishes. He has never seemed to recognize in its true character the nature of the offense for which he was removed.

From your friend, very respectfully

James Buchanan<sup>70</sup>

Phila: Nov. 1 1858

My dear Sir,

I think it is perfectly well ascertained that your friends here can easily raise some 10 or 12 thousand dollars for the purchase of a newspaper; & it is believed the Pennsylvanian can be had for that sum with a clear title & an unencumbered Administration control.



The question now is as to the details, & we have a Committee at work. Col Baker will no doubt write more particularly.

It is my opinion that the State Ex: Com: should at once meet & that a rallying Address should be presented to the Party.

If on tomorrow the Illinois election terminates in a way to check & dismay disaffection, things will at once become easier. The enquiry with the deluded will be at once "Where shall we go to be saved" The Leaders will try their best to prevent it, but the Rank & File will come back & rapidly.

Your Fillibuster Resolution is not only right in itself, but exhibits a satisfactory display of pluck. My Friends maintain that I am a rather impulsive person, but it is singular that your entire programme, calm & unimpassioned as it has been, has met my conscientious approbation. In other words tho' not worth a great deal of course I comprehend, approve, & sympathise with your line of statesmanship.

When in Washington you expressed fears that the Catholic & Foreign Vote might leave the Democratic Party, thro' an impulse imparted from abroad, There is no danger of this! Have no alarm on that score. The difficulty is very much local & the remedy easy. The Catholic Church is by no means Negrophilistic. I suspect a section of that church, or an Order, take great interest in the Irish American question. They had rather see affairs undisturbed; but they have no great obligation to the governmental process of Consti-

tutional asquisition. But they greatly dread having these *Provinces of the Church* plundered & *Sectionalised* at the same time, by ruffianly hands of lawless men, at least so I understand it.

Your Proclamation will please them & your South American Policy generally must be satisfactory.

I send an extract from the Pittsburg Post. Is this H. Maynard? He is anxious to be Governor!

very sincerely yr friend

Ro: Tyler<sup>71</sup>

His Excly

James Buchanan

I am decided in my conviction of the necessity of removing or changing men here.

Sherwood Forest

Oct. 6. 1858

My Dear Governor;

I am in receipt of the invitation to be present at the great Exhibition by the combined Societies, which is to commence on the 25 Inst. at the City of Richmond; accompanied by a note from yourself inviting me to become your guest upon the occasion—I can only make promises conditionally, in consequence of the state of my health—If my health will permit I will be in attendance on the Exhibition— But what of accepting your kind invitation to abide under your roof upon the occasion? When one of my attacks comes on (and it is liable to do so at any moment) I require the per-

fect abandon either of my own house or of a public hotel— Will you not see in this, good reason for my desiring to be at an hotel, the Exchange for example, rather than under any private roof however much, under other circumstances, I would prefer to enjoy the hospitalities of a friend and what friend is more dear to me than yourself— Let me then be located at the Exchange or Ballard House from which I can issue when well, or to which I can retire if unwell without incommoding any body and even without notice— You will inevitably have your hands full with the exhibition, and all the rest of the time will have to be devoted to the many who will visit you— Mrs Tyler will most probably accompany me, should I be able to be in Richmond, and we will both be among those who will visit you and yours, not from the observance of a mere ceremony, but to see those who we admire and esteem—

I regretted that I could not be present at the meeting of the board of Visitors on the 30 Ultimo. I was sick and my good wife was very unwell, so that had I been well I could not have left her. So I duly wrote the Board, but the stupid Boat people put the letter out at Willcox's wharf, and when I reached here on Saturday last, the letter to my confusion was re-delivered to me— I have not yet learned what was done at the meeting—

With salutations to Mrs. Wise

I am Dr. Gov. Truly Yrs.

Gov. Wise

John Tyler<sup>72</sup>

On November 15,<sup>73</sup> President Tyler wrote Robert: "I am glad that the President has awakened to your claims. How rarely do public men have a proper perception of things. The lingering after the flesh-pots of Egypt has ruined many. Polk courted Benton, and Buchanan looked to Forney and Blair, etc. and lo, the result!" Buchanan, as far as I have been able to find out, had not counted Blair among his friends for a long time. The claims may have been an allusion to a re-opening of Buchanan's offer of the paymaster at Philadelphia to Tyler.

Buchanan in his annual message, (December 6, 1858)<sup>74</sup> showed marked joy that quiet had succeeded civil commotion in Kansas. He had not changed his opinion, he said, that admission under the Lecompton constitution would have most effectively settled the slavery question by leaving it entirely to the Kansans themselves. He reminded the country again that, as an individual, he had favored submission of the entire constitution, but acting in an official character, he had felt bound to submit the results of the convention to Congress. The fact that Congress had refused his suggestion, he seemed not to mind. "For my own part," he said, "I should have been willing to yield my assent to almost any constitutional measure to accomplish this object." He had supported the English Bill. The Kansans had refused Lecompton, and Buchanan made an agreement for postponing their reconsideration for admission until they had sufficient population to send a member to Congress. The number needed

would be 93,420. He was in favor of a general rule of this nature as a means to prevent such occurrences as the Kansas trouble. On the other hand he asked Congress to supply money for taking a federal census in Kansas. He urged Congress to declare it the duty of the President to order a census when the Territorial legislature should declare it their belief that a sufficient number of persons were on the Territory to justify its taking. Of course, by these rules, the Kansas question should be in abeyance until after the election of 1860—a quietude of considerable utility to the Democratic forces. Much of the message was devoted to conditions in Mexico and Cuba. Buchanan hoped for expansion, permanent and temporary in these regions, and fain would have Congress pay more attention to them, and less to the slavery agitation.

Phila: Dec. 7 1858

My dear Sir

I have just finished reading your Message & it fully sustains your high character as a Statesman & Patriot. It strikes an immense blow in behalf of your Administration; & if men are not too mad to listen any more to sense & reason, it must have the effect of rallying the Democratic Party here in the North around their old party organs in their accustomed earnestness & vigor. Your Friends are all proud & delighted & your enemies look & I have no doubt, *feel*, ashamed.

Mr Letcher was in the Convention at Petersburg. as John Van Buren said of somebody "like the chol-

era". I hope Gov. Wise is now able to distinguish between a real friend, & these knavish fellows who have tempted him to his ruin. They literally kicked his Douglass Resolutions out of the Convention. I wrote to my brother & other members of the Convention to help lay them out cold & dead, if such Resolutions were offered.

By the by I see that Mr Sickles has broken ground Douglas wise in his Banquet speech at Niblo's. It is published in the N. York Tribune. Greely says yesterday that Virginia has again made you a Candidate! Now if you will allow me to advise without reference to Mr Greely's vaticination, conciliate Wise & his friends. I suppose the Presidency must look a *distant* vision to him just now, & he may be put right.

With my warmest congratulations believe me

Your friend truly

Ro: Tyler<sup>75</sup>

His Exclty

James Buchanan

In the spring of 1859 came news from Philadelphia. V. C. Bradford reported that Judge Lewis was in a club in which Forney was also a member<sup>76</sup>. Later,<sup>77</sup> in the month Tyler reported that Judge Lewis was on friendly terms with Forney. It will be remembered that the two had been friendly before, but that Lewis had supported Buchanan's Kansas policy, while Forney had fought it. Forney was also seeking to be a friend of Wise. Wise was, according to Tyler,

favorable to reconciliation with Buchanan now that Kansas troubles were over. Tyler was not very favorable towards expansion in Cuba, but saw the need of a higher tariff on coal and iron. He made some remarks hostile to Hunter, Breckenridge and Cobb. These gentlemen, it will be noted, were rivals with Wise for Presidential honors. Tyler predicted Letcher's election as governor of Virginia, but was in error in holding that Wise would control the delegates to the Charleston convention from the Old Dominion. Walker, he warned Buchanan, was his secret and bitter foe. His dismissal from the governorship of Kansas and his failure to impress the Republicans had blasted his hopes for political advancement. Now he was evidently laying it all to Buchanan. Knox, Porter and Campbell, according to Tyler, had come to an agreement. Some of the Buchanan men were satisfied with the situation in Pennsylvania at the time of the state convention held in the spring of 1859 at Harrisburg.

Philadelphia had city elections, and Collector Baker,<sup>78</sup> a faithful Achates, warned Buchanan that Vaux was now with the opposition. There was also trouble in having people purchase the Pennsylvanian who would aid Buchanan. Vincent C. Bradford in reporting on events at a state convention, hoped to have a third party and let Forney in it.<sup>79</sup> He had also heard rumor of troubles in Michigan.

The last of April<sup>80</sup> Ex-President Tyler wrote to Robert of the activities in the gubernatorial campaign in Virginia where John Letcher was the Democratic

candidate. He inquired the extent of the breach of the Democrats in Pennsylvania, and remarked, "I fear bad results in 1860." In the next month<sup>81</sup> the son of Botts and O. J. Wise were to fight a duel over insulting attacks Wise had made on Botts. The Botts were full of hatred for the Democrats, and some of Wise's opponents were willing to give their votes to Botts for the Presidency. In the early fall the elder Tyler coached his son on his attitude towards Buchanan's renomination.<sup>82</sup> He warned him against making war upon others as that would not strengthen Buchanan's cause in the convention. But before the letter was finished he received word "authoritatively" that Buchanan would not be a candidate, and this was correct.

June found Robert Tyler reporting his political activities to the President.

Phila. June 17th, 1859

His Exly

James Buchanan  
President of the United States<sup>83</sup>

My dear Sir:

I am very happy indeed that my letter to Govr. Bigler meets with your approval, & I feel your commendation as a great and valued compliment.

I do not know why the proceedings of the Schuykill meeting were so long appearing in the Pennsylvanian, not having had time deliberately to prepare anything. Messrs. Phillips & Bradford both promised to go in my stead but pled off at the last moment. I

spoke of you in unqualified terms. I commended them in the fact of the support they gave your Admn. I said on the territorial question substantially what I have written, of course amplifying somewhat. I referred to certain efforts that had been made in certain quarters to oppose you & to embarrass your Admn. because of your recommendation of specific satisfaction on certain articles, & your general recommendation in favor of a Pacific R. Road. I explained how in regard to the tariff you had been perfectly consistent with past & unchanged opinions. I denied that any mere *method* of collecting duties under a . . . . . tariff whether by "specific" or ad valorem or home valuations, constituted *in itself* a democratic principle & maintained that you had been nominated & elected President with a full knowledge on the part of . . . . . of your record. As to the Pacific R. Road I showed that the Party Platform which was your imperative letter of instructions, contained a resolution in favor of it. I then spoke of the Massachusetts constitutional amendment & the efforts of the Black Republicans to elevate the *negro* in the political scale over the heads of the naturalized citizens. I then contrasted the Democratic party, after describing its character & great services to the country, with the character and purposes of the "opposition", a mere sectional amalgamation of two factions professing opposite opinions on vital questions yet conspiring for mischief, *each* of which had been separately repudiated by the country. I wound up by referring to the late decision of the Supreme

Court of Ohio in the case of the Oberlin prisoners, to the decision of Judge Campbell in the South & to that of the Supreme Ct. of U. States in the case of the slave Amy & expressed my conviction that the *country* even now prepared everywhere North & South, to sustain the laws & govt. I proved that the Democratic party *led by the Admn.* was in perfect accord with the Judiciary & declared that the people of the U. States must soon decide the simple practical issue whether they would follow Seward & Greeley & the other crack-brained politicians in their revolutionary schemes, or sustain the *whole* body of the Judiciary supported by the Admn. Democracy.

In the course of my speech, I also expressed & denounced the "Bogus" movement in our State.

Mr. Brown's appt. is universally commended. Mr. Holt's report *finished* the Westcott case.

I do not certainly know who is now the *active* editor of the Pennsylvanian.

I am glad to see that you are having some paper prepared . . . . explanatory of Genl. Cass' recent note as to the status of naturalized citizens. The principle cannot be impeached. It seems to me that the only . . . . . is to be found in the provisions of *treaties* to be negotiated if possible.

Enclosed is a little paragraph in reference to the Irish papers. It happened to be at hand, having been sent to me & I enclose it.

The following letter<sup>84</sup> of Buchanan was very characteristic. He was ever watching the trends, and

in here is a tactful manner indicating the points in which he desired the Pennsylvania Democracy to be instructed.

Washington 27 June 1859

*Private*

My dear Sir/

I presume your Committee intend to issue an address at their approaching meeting. In my humble judgment you ought to present clearly & strongly the broad and marked line of difference between Squatter Sovereignty & Popular Sovereignty, between the revolutionary attempts of the first squatters in a new Territory to abolish Slavery or prevent its introduction into the Territory through a Territorial Legislature, & the Constitutional & quiet exercise of the rights of Sovereignty by the people of a Territory in the formation of a State Constitution, with or without domestic Slavery as they may determine. In the mean time slave holders take their property to the Territory, & whilst in a Territorial condition it is protected by the Constitution and the Dred Scott decision. The Democratic party by adopting this course is placed on the sure foundation of the Constitution & the law against the arbitrary power of one set of settlers to confiscate the property of another set. The doctrine of Squatter Sovereignty, in my opinion, is equivalent to the declaration that no other Slave State shall ever be admitted into the Union, because the first ten or twenty thousand people who rush into a new territory are never

slave holders. But if mistaken in this belief, then the contest between Slavery & Anti-Slavery Settlers would keep the people in a constant state of commotion throughout their entire territorial existence, much to the prejudice of their best interests & of the peace & harmony of the States of the Union. Let all look forward to the time when in the language of the Cincinnati platform, the people of the territory have the right, "acting through the legally & fairly expressed will of a majority of actual residents, & whenever the number of their inhabitants justifies it, to form a constitution with or without domestic Slavery & be admitted into the Union upon terms of perfect equality with the other States."

The design attributed by Mr. Douglas to the Democratic party to reopen the Slave Trade or to establish a Congressional Slave Code is truly ridiculous. Non-intervention on the part of Congress with the question of Slavery is the true as it is the actual policy of the party. Neither is intervention necessary, because without it the Federal Judiciary is capable of maintaining the rights to Slave property in the Territories. The great Shibboleth of Mr. Douglas now is Squatter Sovereignty. By this he expects to conciliate the Anti-Slavery feeling in the North and thus to divide the Democratic party. This ought to be the point of our main attack. He will graciously condescend to become the Candidate of the Democratic party at Charleston if they will stultify themselves & adopt this plank. I write in haste. I have no doubt you

have thought of all these things before; but I know you will not object to my crude suggestions.

Ever your friend

James Buchanan

Robert Tyler Esq

The following letter of August, 1859, sheds further light on Wise's relation with Douglas.

Washington<sup>85</sup>  
August 2, 1859

My dear Sir:

I will commence this note by saying that you will probably remember that I have professed to have been praying for your elevation to the Presidency for the last nine months; this is true, and moreover, there has not occurred a single circumstance of mark, in that time, which has not had a tendency to that end.

In noticing the "Constitution" of this date, I perceive an insolent article in reference to yourself and this communication is intended to insist that O. J. Wise, Esq. shall take no other notice of it than through the columns of the Enquirer should be taken, etc.—for I can assure you that no matter how just the action may be, yet some persons are doomed to condemnation if they dare to do it even. And this is exemplified in the case of the recent duel. I was never more gratified than that Will refused to shoot the creature, for if he had acted justly towards him and had put him out of the world, the end would have never come to the hue

and cry which would have been raised, all intended for your injury! but the refusal to shoot him has stopped all the mouths ready opened for exultant condemnation. Under all these views of matters and things I hope no other notice will be taken of this case, than a retaliation with the pen. You know that there is no fight in the concern that would not be soiling to its antagonist—it is a dirty sheet all over, and is held in utter contempt by even some of its involuntary agents, for I know two warm friends of yours who receive a pittance for some outside services—so long as it bears the name democratic—and they can thus more conveniently maintain a subsistence in what is recognized as democratic service. I wish the Enquirer would heap upon Douglas compliments for all the qualities for which he deserves them, always attaching the utmost condemnation to his squatter sovereignty doctrine; I find that the Douglas men appreciate the opinion of the Enquirer that Senator D. is better to be trusted than the Compromise men of the South; have this feeling kept up, and you may rely upon it, that it will produce a healthy feeling among many of the Douglas men who are worth pleasing to that extent. You may possibly remember that I told you long ago that the party would have to come to your position, but that the politicians would prefer Douglas to you, and that your only hope was with the people, and I now repeat that, had Douglas stuck to your position he could not have been kept out of the nomination at Charleston, but providence has directed differently,

and since his explanations in the Senate of his Territorial Sovereignty position he has only the power left to serve, or injure another, and this is the reason that I advise the above course towards him.

There is one thing which I had intended to write you a special letter about, but I will only say, by all means turn out "Taylor" as flour inspector, and appoint "Fausset" in his stead—because he is a Smith or Wise man as far as it serves his interest, and Fausset has been ostracised for being true to you. I mentioned the matter only to Brent, and he said he would rejoice at it. I know that the act will please all your true friends much, and will meet with the unqualified approval of the men of the city who are interested. In haste, I am devotedly your

Obt. servant

W. W. Tyler

P. S. If this is done, let it be done without any premonition to any parties, let its moral attend the act unsullied by calculations of self-interest, and I warrant the fruit to be good.

W. W. Tyler

Kansas was now behaving herself<sup>86</sup> but an event was at hand which would soon eclipse the excitement and feeling which the Kansas struggle had brought into politics.

## Chapter V

### THE DEMOCRACY VS. BROWN AND LINCOLN

Throughout the fall of 1859, there was a good deal of bad blood in evidence in a Democratic feud in the Quaker City. James Van Dyke, who has been already mentioned in Robert Tyler's letters, disliked the dictation of Joseph B. Baker, Buchanan's life-long friend and Collector of the Port. Due to these important considerations, Baker seems to have had the dispensation of most of the patronage.

In September Van Dyke complained of two attacks made upon him by the "Pennsylvanian," which he claimed was regarded as Baker's organ and supposed to be edited by George W. Baker, the Collector's brother and an arch foe of Van Dyke. The latter prophesied that a new paper would shortly enter the lists against the Bakers. He hoped that such an attitude would not be construed by Buchanan as hostility to his administration. Baker also complained of Mr. Hamilton. Van Dyke deemed it his duty to tell the President that in consequence of the abuse he had received he might be compelled to aid the enemies of the Pennsylvanian in the coming contest.



Buchanan's reply is as follows:

*Private*<sup>1</sup>

Washington, 14 September, 1859

My dear Sir:

I have received your favor of the 12th instant, and although the contents grieved they did not surprise me. After all my efforts to reconcile you to Mr. Baker had proven vain, I thought things would proceed from bad to worse. He holds the principal office under the Administration in Philadelphia, and is an excellent officer, and I know him to be an honest man. I cannot think of removing him. The late fight was bitter, and if the federal officers had been defeated on that occasion it would have been exceedingly annoying to myself on account of its effect upon the country. The unsuccessful party now proceeds to get up a paper to attack the office holders. This is indirectly to attack the Administration. I have too long watched the course of political events not confidently to predict the result. I know and am convinced that you have no idea at the present moment of assuming a hostile attitude to myself; but events stronger than men will place you in this position. I have been and now am so warmly attached to you and yours; that I should feel more the loss of your personal friendship than all the influence you could bring against me were you so disposed. My whole desire is to retire gracefully from public life, and I shall go home to Wheatland in March 1861, should Providence prolong my life until that period,

with much greater satisfaction than I experienced on my journey hither. From all parts of the interior of Pennsylvania, I once received the most gratifying information. It would indeed be truly unfortunate if there should be another offshoot from the party in Philadelphia. I have this moment approved your account. I have not read the articles in the Pennsylvanian against yourself, nor have I them in my power at the present moment. I wish you would send them to me. I had expected you here long ere this, and I am sorry you did not come.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Van Dyke, I remain very respectfully your friend,

James Buchanan

James C. Van Dyke, Esquire

Speaking of this bitterness, as early as 1858, Buchanan wrote to William B. Reed, Minister to China, "Things look rather blue in your good city of Philadelphia, but this arises rather from division among our friends than from the apostacy of Forney and Packer."<sup>2</sup> Collector Baker wrote his complaints of Van Dyke also to the President.

Buchanan had the matter before the cabinet and Van Dyke continued to present his side of the case.<sup>3</sup> Evidently he was determined to fight Baker, the Collector, to the last ditch. Buchanan had for years been a warm friend of the Collector, and after doing what he could to harmonize his two friends, finally, in the spring of 1860, naturally sided with Baker. Van

Dyke's tender self-respect did not prevent him from publishing Buchanan's letters<sup>4</sup> at the time of the Covode investigation, which was no less the work of Forney than Covode. Yet he stuck to his Democratic ideals and we find him active in the Democratic Convention of 1864. Baker, an avowed Democrat of the Calhoun school was ever true to Buchanan, and after the President had passed into the final resting place of man, continued to defend his name from partisan attacks. In this controversy, Buchanan, by his long-suffering attitude, made Van Dyke out an ungrateful politician who had to be dismissed because of his everlasting love of combat.

The President was allowing himself some hopeful moments, but they proved to be but a lull before a greater storm.

To. R. Tyler

Washington,<sup>5</sup> 15th October, 1859

My dear Sir:

I have received yours of the 15th instant. I have an instinct in such matters, created by long experience, and I perceive the certain symptoms of triumph in Pennsylvania in 1860. The Democracy will then be thoroughly aroused against Seward.

I shall be most happy to see you in Washington, and trust you will come directly to the White House and make it your home during your visit.

I shall make your request known to Mr. Holt respecting Messrs. Ray and Wynan; but if their

services are not required, there is an end of the matter.

Your friend, as ever,

James Buchanan

Cameron as well as Buchanan knew how poorly his rival Seward might run in the Keystone. Moreover, his friends sent out a brief life in pamphlet form in the same year. Cameron's moderation on the slavery question was stressed and his attitude in favor of a higher tariff duly exalted.

The following letter of Tyler graphically reviews the situation in Pennsylvania in the fall of 1859, with some valuable additions on the campaign of 1856:

Phila;<sup>6</sup> October 17, 1859

My dear Sir:

I have the honor to receive your kind letter and accept your invitation with the greatest pleasure. I had already proposed to leave for Washington in the morning and therefore hope to find myself at your House in the evening.

The calculation now is that the opposition majority will not reach 15,000. The aggregate vote is larger too than was first thought to be the case. The fact has leaked out that the opposition spent money quite freely in several districts, and made very great exertion to obtain overwhelming majorities. It is certain that a good deal of disappointment prevails the opposition here.—so much so—that . . . . . on Saturday gave Mr. Forney and the Anti-Lecomptonites an

insulting snub for their great . . . . and small performance.

When I consider the number of *leading* politicians in the Democratic Party who were anxious (?) (I felt them in the canvass at every step) to beat *you* if possible at this election, and who in their treachery went almost to the verge of opposing the organization itself in some cases, I am surprised at your strength. After surveying the whole ground I conscientiously believe that your name would prove stronger today in Pennsylvania than that of any other man in our party. I have said it repeatedly since the election to our friends. In October 1856 we carried the State by barely 2500 majority after spending one hundred thousand dollars. Now the regular opposition flushed with certain triumph and *defection in all its phases* (including the *special friends* of every outside Presidential candidate) have only made by comparison a difference of less than 20,000 in the popular vote. No faction suggests anybody else's name and let that name fight the regular opposition earnestly combined, and the quiet but vaticinious enmity of the friends of every other candidate in our party and I should like to see the result. But I am unnecessarily occupying your attention.

Believe me very sincerely

Your friend,

Ro Tyler

His Excy

James Buchanan

An event far more important than struggles over the patronage was now at hand. On the 16th of October, 1859, John Brown, armed with a fanatical and murderous conscience and plenty of arms supplied from the North, seized the strategic position of Harper's Ferry in an effort to bring immediate and forceful emancipation of the slave regardless of all consequences.<sup>7</sup> No worse blow could have befallen the lovers of the Union. Here was the material that the radicals of both sides had long awaited.

For three days the wires bore telegraph dispatches to the President from the scene of events. Wise was all activity. Buchanan ordered some marines to retake the arsenal, thus showing the South that the executive would be depended upon in a crisis. The arsenal was taken and Brown captured. Several persons, including a United States soldier, had been killed in the episode for which Brown and his lieutenants were tried by the State of Virginia for murder and convicted. Since Brown's prior offenses were against the state he was surrendered to Virginia for trial.

Governor Wise acted with great celerity. He urged neighboring states to prevent rescue parties whom he thought would try and rescue Brown from the jail at Charleston. Governor Packer of Pennsylvania sent a dignified reply that Pennsylvania would do her duty and that there was no attempt as far as he knew to rescue Brown. Buchanan and the Pennsylvania Governor thought Wise somewhat over-zealous. The

governors of Ohio and Iowa incensed the South by refusing Wise's request.

The Brown episode may have given some advantage to the Buchanan men in the contest for delegates to a Democratic convention.

Phila:<sup>8</sup> Nov 7- 1859

My dear Sir

The opposition or Anti-adm. party will not have more than two *clear* delegates (most likely only one). We have certainly 15 uncontested seats & there are four contested seats *three* of which we shall get *before* the convention most probably. Altogether the result could not be more gratifying. Had we been *stiffly* sustained at Washington when we first moved on the accursed traitors here, I fully believe we should have carried *every delegate*. You are the strongest man in the Union for the next Presidency; and *I do not now* intend to stop at trifles. Let old Jersey vote Democratic & I ask for no more. Baker & Hamilton & Brown are perfect trumps & Mr. McKibbey behaved well

I wonder if my old Know-nothing friend Jenks (Danl.) is still of opinion that Judge Campbell is your best friend, & that I am of no account among the *Irish*—or elsewhere. If he knew the truth he would learn that I have some friends among the Germans & Irish, but *more* among the American portion of our party.

It is my deliberate opinion that there are ten Democrats in this City friendly to you to two for the other side, or for any one else.

The enclosed extracts from the "Press" (how the fellow was deluded this morning!) show you as I wrote yesterday, the *moral* of the Contest.

This is the last *battle*, & now for *conciliation*!

Your sincere friend

Ro: Tyler

His Ecly

James Buchanan

Tyler's views on the subject of the raid appear on the 25th.

Phila:<sup>9</sup> Novr. 25th 1859.

My dear Sir:

I thank you for your long & friendly letter. I shall take the greatest pleasure in trying to serve you. My supposed influence however, at Washington, is greatly exaggerated.

Old Brown and his Confederates will be hung *especially* and unquestionably.<sup>10</sup> Why they should incite the least sympathy is very surprising to all Virginians & I may say to most conservative men. They are nothing more or less than a kind of "Thugs". By profession Negro and horse thieves, they have stained their hands and souls with the most diabolical murders. They have violated *all* Law, Human and Divine. The Law of God. "Thou shalt do no murder". The Law of the Union, having been convicted of Treason. The law of Virginia having been convicted of murder and a conspiracy to produce a horrible Slave Insur-

rection; & what is worse than anything else, they have violated that *Common Law of Hospitality* which even a Bedouin Arab or a <sup>COMANCHE</sup> ~~Comanche~~ Indian will respect. It is a great mistake to suppose that the People of the Southern States *desire* to secure the sympathy & c & c of the Northern men at the expense of their honor or right. They will establish a separate Confederacy in less than two years unless the People of our Section fall back from the atrocious doctrines now proclaimed by the Opposition, & be content to see the Government of the United States executed in conformity with the principles of the Constitution.

Mr. McClanahan is attached to the New York Herald Office.

yr. friend

Ro Tyler

Mr. Johnston

My dear Sir;

I send the enclosed letter form a . . . . . I have received & my answer. I also send an article from the Pennsylvanian.

Yrs.

R. T.

Brown being in jail, abolitionists seized the pen for the sword. Letters asking for the commuting of the death sentence gave Wise proof of the anti-slavery sentiment in the North. One from New York bore 341 names. Some of the epistles threatened the combative executive with violence. These epistles could only

serve to make him more determined. Among those who urged moderation was John C. Breckenridge.

In answer to a letter from Wise requesting Federal aid in preventing an attempt to rescue Brown, Buchanan wrote an official letter. The President's opinion in the light of events which were to follow in 1860, was of great importance. It is a clear and carefully stated forecast of what Buchanan's policy would be in case a decision became necessary.

Washington City,<sup>11</sup> 28 November, 1859

Sir:

I received on yesterday your favor of the 25th instant. stating that you have information from various quarters, on which you rely "that a conspiracy of formidable intent in means and members is formed in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and other states to rescue John Brown and his associates, prisoners at Charleston, Virginia." The information you believe is specific enough to be reliable and you are convinced that "an attempt will be made to secure the prisoners and if that fails, then to seize citizens of this state (Virginia) as hostages and victims, in case of execution."

You do not communicate the fact on which your convictions are founded in the absence of which it would seem almost incredible that any portion of the people of the States mentioned should be guilty of the atrocious wickedness, as well as folly, of attempting to rescue convicted traitors and murderers from the

penalty due to their crimes under the outraged laws of Virginia. You express entire confidence in which I heartily participate that the Old Commonwealth is abundantly able and willing to carry her own laws into execution. Had they been otherwise and had you as Governor of Virginia (the legislature not now being in session) made application to me for the aid which the Constitution and laws of the United States would enable me to afford, this should have been cheerfully and cordially granted. Still, there is one measure which on the presumption that your information is well-founded, it is both my right and my duty to adopt. That is to reinforce the guard already stationed at Harper's Ferry. This may become necessary not only to protect the public property clearly within Federal jurisdiction, but to prevent the insurgency from seizing the arms in the arsenal at that place and using them against the troops of Virginia. Besides it is possible the additional troops may be required to act as a posse comitatus on the requisition of the Marshal of the United States for the Western District of Virginia to prevent the rescue of Stevens, now in his custody, charged with the crime of high treason. I have, therefore, as a precautionary measure, directed the Secretary of War to order two companies of Artillery to proceed immediately from Fortress Monroe to Harper's Ferry.

You also inform me that "places in Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania have been occupied as depots and rendezvous by these desperadoes unobstructed by

guards, to invade Virginia" and you apprise me of these facts in order that I "may take steps to preserve peace between the States."

I am at a loss to discover any provision in the Constitution and laws of the United States which would authorize me to "take steps" for this purpose. It is doubtless the duty of the respective State Governments to break up such depots and to prevent their citizens from making incursions into Virginia, to disturb its peace or prevent the execution of its laws. If the Federal Executive, however, were to enter those States and perform this duty for them, it would be a manifest usurpation of their rights. Were I thus to act it would be a palpable invasion of State sovereignty and as a precedent might prove highly dangerous.

My authority for calling the militia or employing the army and navy is derived exclusively from the Acts of Congress of the 12th of February, 1795, and the 3rd March, 1807, which clearly do not embrace such a case as is now presented. It will not be pretended that such incursions from one State into another would be an invasion of the United States "from any foreign nation or Indian tribe" under the act of February, 1795, rendering it lawful for the President to employ the federal forces "to repel such invasions." In conclusion, I beg to express the hope that whether the information you have received be founded in truth or not, the energetic measures already adopted under your direction will prove suf-

ficient for any emergency that may occur.

Yours very respectfully,

*James Buchanan*

*His Excellency*

*Henry A. Wise,*

*Governor of Virginia,*

*Richmond, Virginia*

It is also interesting to note that a copy of this letter was read in the Senate by Davis in answer to a resolution of Douglas which would have given the Federal Court the power to act against threatened combination of this nature. Upon this occasion Davis remarked, "Why, sir, we are about to forget that this is a confederation held together by a great treaty."<sup>12</sup>

The more conservative States took alarm at the outbreak. The South became more and more convinced that it would not be safe under a Republican President. Virginia passed stirring resolutions; North Carolina passed resolutions expressing confidence and appreciation of the action of Wise and Buchanan; urged the Governor to form local companies to prevent similar outbreaks; protested against incendiary literature and persons spreading similar propaganda in the State. Two resolutions showing the feelings of the State are given in full:

3. "That the Union of the States can only be perpetuated so long as it continues to be a Union of equals. We are still devoted to it and would behold its dissolution with profound regret; yet if we cannot

hold our slave property, and at the same time enjoy repose and tranquillity in the Union, we will be constrained in justice to ourselves and to our posterity to establish new forms and provide new guards for our security and well being; relying for success in so doing on the righteousness of our cause, and on the support of that Providence who so signally guided and succored our ancestors in times of danger."

4. "That while declaring our sincere devotion to the Union according to the Constitution, as it was established by our forefathers, and while we are ready to uphold and maintain it as a Common Union of equals, we are not unmindful of the fact that the disturbers of our peace have received and are receiving the active sympathies and the substantial support of large portions of the people of the non-slaveholding states; and that it behooves the people of the non-slaveholding states, if they would perpetuate 'domestic tranquillity' and perpetuate the Union, to arouse themselves from the condition of lethargy which seems to prevail among them, and to adopt such measures and take such action as may be necessary to prevent a continuance of them upon the South, and as may assure our people that they are still faithful as confederate States to the common Constitution which unites us."<sup>13</sup>

In Congress an investigation<sup>14</sup> was ordered, which only served to increase the excitement. Certain persons in the North, including some of the members of Congress, had contributed to funds used by Brown

without inquiring very definitely as to the purposes for which they were to be used. To the excited Southerners, this was practically the same as conspiracy against their section. While it did not yield the fruits expected by some of the radicals, it was an eloquent testimony to the activities of the Kansas Aid and similar societies that kept up their contributions long after the matter was all settled in the distracted territory.

Buchanan and other Northern Democrats hoped that the incident would have a quieting effect on the North. Bigler wrote that it had a happy effect in Pennsylvania where it was looked upon as an example of Seward's theory.<sup>15</sup> A New Yorker hoped the South would be calm, or it would widen the gap in the party.<sup>16</sup> In New England, some believed it killed Seward's chances for the Presidency.

In his message for 1859 Buchanan urged again the cultivation of better sentiment between the sections; expressed his faith in the conservatism of the masses of the Northern people; warned the "country" of the rashness of the extremists, and repeated his former statements on the natural and understandable attitude of the South. In leaving the topic, he alluded to the quieting effect the incident would likely afford in preventing similar outbreaks, saying:<sup>17</sup>

"They will resolve that the Constitution and the Union shall not be endangered by rash counsels, knowing that should 'the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken . . . . at the fountain' human power

could never reunite the scattered and hostile fragments."

It was in this message that he gave himself the 'appellation of an "old public functionary," saying:

"This advice proceeds from the heart of an old public functionary whose service commenced in the last generation among the wise and conservative statesmen of that day, now nearly all passed away, and whose first and dearest earthly wish is to leave his country tranquil, prosperous, united and powerful."

While the John Brown raid was held to be a wholesome example by some of the Northern conservatives, to many of the South it appeared to be a last straw. Violent abolitionism had appeared in their very midst. Small wonder the Administration was troubled.

Wise's energetic action had pronounced political results. Hunter's friends admitted as much to their chief. Seddon wrote<sup>18</sup> that "Wise has exploited this whole affair to his own selfish aggrandizement, to aid his vain hopes for the Presidency and to strengthen the fragment of a Southern party he leads." He also feared Wise had stirred up more animosity in both sections than he could alay. Seddon also thought that the South might be very vehement and fickle on the subject, and that Wise would oppose any practical disunion move which might arise as a result of the raid. Seddon was for a Union if the South would be safe in it. If not, he favored an attempt by a single state at secession before Seward or any of his stripe if elected could assume power.



An attack by Senator Iverson of Georgia attributing "deception and corruption" to the Northern Democrats in their attitude towards the South naturally caused some bad blood. Bigler protested<sup>19</sup> such brand of conduct to Robert Tyler and indicated that every Southern Senator, save Iverson, approved of his repelling the latter's assertion.<sup>20</sup>

The following letter by ex-President Tyler shows his views of the political effects of the Brown episode.

Sherwood Forest<sup>21</sup>  
Dec. 23. 1859

My Dear Robert:

I return the enclosures of your last letter rec'd yesterday— The tributes of respect you receiv'd at York and elsewhere are certainly flattering— Your speech at Philadelphia has been read by many in this part of the country and is much applauded—it was published in the Washington Star which John has sent me— Miss Brown's letter you can answer very briefly and readily Waller's, John's, your own, Jones's Tazewell little girl and Rufus Dennison are all familiar— My six here, David Gardiner, John Alexander, Julia, Lachlan, Lionel, and Fitz Walter will be added to your list— Your mother's ancestors (if necessary) you can trace back to your Great Grandfather William Christian, and your grandmother's to the Brown's and Pierce's of James City—and that as far as I can go Julia's runs back to Lionel Gardiner, who was, and

whose descendants are the possessor of Gardiner's Island— and on her mother's side to the McLacklan who led the Clans McLachlan and McLane in the battle of Culloden where he perish'd— But I do not believe that the good lady wants any thing but the names without previous geneology—so a few lines will suffice— I have just finish'd and despatched an Historic & Genealogical acct of my Ancestors on both sides, paternal and maternal to the Society in Boston of which I am made an honorary member. They requested the sketch and it is briefly given. It will appear in their Register— I am very sorry to hear of Priscilla's indisposition, but am pleased to learn that she is better— I have been under the weather for some time with a return of my old annoying complaint which after an intermission of 12 months returnd upon me— I nevertheless stir about the house and farm— Encreasing years bring on encreasing infirmities, and doubtless it is all right—

I do not doubt the overthrow of the Republicans—if our folks are firm but temperate Vallandigham's speech is good— He has happily suggested the plan of a confederacy of the Mississippi valley States in the event of dissolution— If broken up the fragments would collect around three centres, the North, the West, and the South— You may rely upon it that Virginia will prepare for the worst—there is a rally thro' the North, around the Democratic flag, I can not doubt its success—but is not a new element of discord opend at N. York, in the nomination of Genl.

Scott— The conservative men may rally to him in place of uniting with the Democrat—*Nous verrons*— What means this numerous body of Southern Medical Students proposing to leave Philadelphia for Richmond? As many as 150 the papers state are likely to be enroute for Richmond—

With love to P. and children—in which Julia unites—

Yr Father

J. Tyler

Ro: Tyler Esq

The following interesting letter probably came from the pen of Buchanan's nephew and namesake:

*Washington,*<sup>21</sup> 21 February, 1860

*Old Man:*

You know I like to talk to you and you ought to know that I like to write to you, but with these devilish ups and downs of living here a person hasn't much chance.

I want you to talk to me like a father and give me useful instructions to your dutiful son, if you don't intend coming here soon, where we could converse with less trouble. I want some instructions from you in politics so as to help me understand some of the things that are going on.

I was at a place the other day where amongst others Ludlow of New York was talking. If I can judge the New Yorkers, they want to give great prom-

inence to their delegation and eventually to bring about the nomination of a New Yorker. Now what Ludlow was inculcating was this: "The battlefield," said he, "would be New York." Why so? Pennsylvania is a gone State. But is not Seward the strongest in New York?<sup>22</sup> Very true, but he is a protectionist, and that gives him Pennsylvania. You see how highly they rate the strength of this idea.

Now there are some things I want to ask you. Did New York money and influence turn things so decidedly in 1856 as they represent it?<sup>23</sup> (Ludlow said as a fixed fact that Weed had allowed Pennsylvania to go as it did.) Is it true that any influences that were brought to bear on Pennsylvania then made any material change in what the result would have been? Tell me this inter nos. I want you to post me up in these and I want you to do it at your leisure and not give yourself any trouble, but it will never do for you to leave me, your favorite child, in ignorance.

You will be wanted at Charleston, I think, and they had better send you from Pennsylvania or in my trivial opinion they will find themselves out-witted there, though the meeting of fifteen states all of one mind will baffle evil.

Write next month, or any time at all.

Yours very truly,

*James Buchanan*

*Robert Tyler, Esq.*

Tyler indicated in a letter of February 24th that a certain article disapproved of by the Administration had been prevented from appearing in the "Atlas." Tyler believed Van Dyke to be the author. He said it had been copied in the "Pennsylvanian" from a Baltimore paper. Upon the arrival of trouble the editor, (George W. Baker) disavowed it. Van Dyke then made a search for the author but refused to certify. Tyler wondered if Buchanan would continue to protect Van Dyke. No good lawyer, he wrote, would have anything to do with Van Dyke. Such an opinion clearly showed there was a bad factional fight in progress. Van Dyke sued George W. Baker for libel over the authorship of the article. A court scene<sup>24</sup> followed gleefully reported by the critical "Press" of Forney. It had nearly ended in a free-for-all. Van Dyke, as has been already noted, finally failed to receive the Administration's support.

Robert Tyler was evidently anxious to learn his father's attitude toward Governor Wise as the time for re-electing delegates to the Charleston Convention drew near. Wise was not reconciled officially with the Administration. The ex-President replied to his son as follows:

"Today the General Assembly gave a complimentary dinner to Governor Wise, and I have been invited to it, but declined attending. My letter is full of professions of friendship for the Governor, which I sincerely feel, but I say nothing political. If you ask me whether I approve of the Governor's political views

in toto, my answer would be in the negative. I have regretted his opposition in the main to Mr. Buchanan. I think, on the contrary, that the President has acquitted himself well in his high office, and if renominated I should go to the polls and vote for him with alacrity; but my friendship for Wise is almost indestructible. It had its beginning in times of great trouble, and he was faithful. His election to the Presidency is equivalent to an endorsement of my administration by the country, and therefore as well as for my confidence in him, his election would be gratifying to me. I think he will carry the electoral vote of Virginia in the convention; but even if he and Douglas should be inclined to break up the convention, of which I should entirely disapprove, my belief is that neither will be permitted to do it, even by their supporters. The condition of the country is altogether too critical for this. Some man will be nominated without a platform, which at most is a useless thing. We had in 1839-40 far greater dissensions at Harrisburg, and a platform would have scattered us to the winds."<sup>24</sup>

From the Hunter Correspondence it appears that Wise was still able to marshal considerable political strength due to his handling of the Harper's Ferry episode. William T. Yancey wrote Hunter from Lynchburg<sup>25</sup> that Wise was arrogantly trying to force himself upon the Virginians, and intimated that there would be war to the knife in opposition to any such scheme. N. B. Hill wanted Hunter to come to Rich-

mond<sup>26</sup> and make a big speech to counteract Wise's work there. By April 5, William Old, Jr., believed that Hunter had the state,<sup>27</sup> but continued, "We will need our strongest men in Charleston with the delegation to make them really work for you." Old feared an intrigue in the State which was to drop Hunter for anybody else after things were begun. Old himself showed a canny caution about antagonizing Douglas too openly. Letcher reported that at the district convention held at Richmond, nearly all the followers of Wise opposed a resolution pledging the members to the support of the Charleston nominees. Lyons, a prominent Wise supporter, was said to have said he could not support Douglas if nominated. Neither Wise nor Hunter received the instructions from the State Convention. The matter was left to the several congressional districts to make a choice between the two.<sup>28</sup>

Thomas L. Kane of Philadelphia said N. B. Brown (Postmaster) wanted some of the Pennsylvania and Virginia men in the same boat for Charleston. Brown was, of course, for Hunter. The published correspondence indicates that Hunter had well wishers in many states both north and south. Well he might, for he had an attractive personality. Douglas was his most mentioned opponent. Wise, of course, was a factor, and some hoped to find a compromise candidate in Ex-President Tyler. Guthrie of Kentucky showed more strength than Hunter in the convention. He had not been much considered by Hunter's friends

as a formidable rival before the convention met. Charles Mason wrote<sup>29</sup> that the game was too well played for "unsophisticated men like the Virginia delegation." If Hunter did not get the nomination, Mason held he would still be available in 1864. Guthrie, Lane, and Breckinridge as well as Hunter were being considered. The convention adjourned, Hunter's friends still had hopes for him. His followers were by no means a unit in what attitude to take toward the two sections of the party. Hunter was advised meanwhile to lie low before the rival convention met. Hunter did sign a paper with some other members of Congress entitled an "Address to the National Democracy." This paper, of course, was but one in the war of the coalition against Douglas. Hunter's signature on this paper was deemed by at least one of his friends ill advised. But how could Hunter have done otherwise? A refusal would have made him a party outlaw like Douglas.

Governor Letcher was disappointed when he heard that Rhett was at the head of the South Carolina delegation to the Richmond convention. "I do not think it possible," he wrote, "that any party can survive the leadership of such politicians, as Rhett and Yancey."

After a second secession from the Baltimore convention Breckinridge and Lane were nominated by the Southern and Administration forces. It was Hunter's last chance, but the future was still happily veiled.

The Pennsylvania Democracy had its own spring-time troubles. Forney, Packer, and the "Press" gang were pitted against the Administration forces led by Collector Baker. Benjamin H. Brewster<sup>30</sup> hailed Baker, Tyler and Phillips as the "triumvirate that rule us here by permission of the power they hold from the President." The insurgents secured as their candidate for Governor, General Henry D. Foster, "a most worthy, faithful, and capable man." The delegation to Charleston was a medley. The Administration had the most to do with its composition. Bigler was perhaps the most prominent member, but he could not control the group. At the convention the real leader of the Administration forces was not the Senator from Pennsylvania, but John Slidell of Louisiana.

On March 20th Tyler<sup>31</sup> wrote Buchanan the following letter:

Philadelphia, March 20th, 1860

My dear Sir:

The Charleston programme is getting to be a clear thing.

I am perfectly indifferent to the particular nominee, unless the convention were to tender to you the unsolicited nomination, and you were to consent to accept it.

From a lingering old Virginia feeling I might prefer Mr. Hunter; as a member of your cabinet, Mr. Cobb; as a personal friend, Mr. Slidell. But the con-

duct of our leading politicians towards yourself and Adm. has filled me with disgust, and something like despair, not so much because of my personal regard and respect for yourself, as because of their want of principle and insufferable stupidity.

But, to return, it appears that Mr. Hunter will now carry Virginia. If so, Douglas will do everything in his power (failing himself,) to procure his nomination. Douglas's future requires two things. First, the nomination of a man *without a platform* at Charleston; second, that the nominee shall *fail* of an election. He cannot succeed in 1864 unless he can seduce the Southern States into his support. Now the Adm. of a sound Democrat would only strengthen the anti-squatter feeling of the Southern States, while such an Adm. would react upon him or his strongholds. For the same reason a sufficient\* and precise\* *platform* will be a wall of . . . against his seductive approaches hereafter in the way of sapping the Southern opposition to him.

So soon then as the South may unite on Mr. Hunter (and this result he will encourage) he will in an apparently most generous spirit declare that he will support him, and this too *without a platform*? But should this Trojan horse be accepted, the fate of our nominee is settled. He will be slaughtered without fail.

The question simply is, "Shall Douglas (Sic) kill the Democratic party, and maintain a successful war upon yourself and friends, or shall we kill him?" I,

for one, am for skinning and quartering this Demagogue. We must have a strong platform—the strongest, I think. We must drive him from the party, or cut him in two with a platform. Besides, our only chance for an election is in a platform. A rally of the Democratic Party will not do—we haven't votes enough—the opposition must be demoralized and broken.

With Great Respect,

Your friend,

Ro. Tyler

His excl.

James Buchanan.

In the spring of 1860, the Republicans of the House prepared for their customary drive against the Democratic administration. The Whigs had attacked Polk in 1844 and a large anti-slavery volume on Kansas troubles was the work of the Republicans in 1856. This bulky volume prepared in the worst partisan manner with scant respect for the minority, had circulated among the Republicans in the Fremont campaign. The attack of 1860 was taking a more personal note. Forney had now Mazeppa-like returned to plague Buchanan. He was at his old post, Clerk of the House, by the grace of the Republicans and Douglas Democrats. Highly inflamed by hatred of Buchanan and his Southern allies, he thirsted for revenge, proclaimed his attitude beforehand in a public speech and sought another of like mind to aid him in his schemes of political slaughter. He found in the radi-

cal Pennsylvania congressman John Covode a man to do his bidding.<sup>32</sup> "Never in the history of Parliamentary proceedings since they ceased to be made the instruments of mere partisan malice," declared Buchanan's biographer Curtis, "had there been such a violation of Constitutional principles and of every maxim of virtue." A few sinecures were uncovered. The Democrats were shown to have used printing contracts to aid their causes. The Whigs had done likewise when they had had the opportunities. Governor Walker did his best to make himself a political martyr instead of a presidential aspirant who had driven a bargain with the editor of the Herald of Freedom for his share in defeating the Lecompton constitution. Forney and Covode hoped to impeach Buchanan, but completely failed in their purpose. But the Republicans thus manufactured free campaign literature in the form of the majority reports to use in the campaign of 1860.<sup>33</sup>

Referring to Buchanan's first defiant reply, Robert Tyler wrote:

Phila<sup>34</sup> March 30 (1860)

My dear Sir,

Your Protest is exactly what it should be. It is equal to the occasion & to your office & character. It has produced a powerful impression.<sup>35</sup>

Very sincerely yr friend

His Excl.

James Buchanan

Ro: Tyler

In the spring of 1860 State Senator William Henry Welsh of York county<sup>36</sup> became head of the Pennsylvania State Central Committee. The convention had met at Reading where Welsh had presided. Buchanan had found Tyler's loyalty and talent unquestioned and the change was in no way a reflection upon his efforts. It was now time for the delegates to leave for Charleston to nominate a Democrat for President.

Phila. <sup>37</sup> April 19 (1860)

My Dear Sir

The Delegation went of yesterday in good spirits with a fair wind and I trust will safely reach Port tho' the Devil must be itching to strangle some rascals on board.

Of the sound men in the Delegation your friends unquestionably hold a considerable majority. I make 24 out of the 38, who ought to be & must be *true* and *honest*.

There was an attempt at starting, to get up a cheer for Douglas. One of the most miserable failures possible.

I have just left the Ledger office where I went to converse with Mr. Lane (the Editor) about the infamous Covode Committee. I explained to him who Schnoble is & painted Mr. R. J. Walker<sup>38</sup> in his true colors and exposed in pretty strong language the policy and objects of the "Thieves Combination" against the President of the U. States. I hope he will notice the

matter. I have nothing to do with the Pennsylvanian and have had nothing to do with it for six or eight months.

Mr. Wm. Kinsey of Bristol Bucks Co. informs me that he has applied to you for the appointment to the office of Paymaster in the Army, and has requested me to write to you in his behalf.

He is a sound Democrat who stood firmly by your Admtn., is a man of more than ordinary intelligence and would no doubt make a faithful Officer. Any reasonable office would I think be satisfactory. I have no personal interest in the question.

With great respect

Yr friend

Ro: Tyler

His Ecly

James Buchanan

The Charleston Convention, it will be remembered, divided the Democratic party. The Alabama delegation, acting under instructions, seceded from the convention because that body did not accept the platform containing positive guarantees for the protection of slave property in a territory. The delegations of Mississippi, Florida, and Texas followed together with portions of other delegations. Those remaining finally adjourned to meet in Baltimore, June 18th, while those who left the convention determined to reconvene in Richmond, June 11th.

On June 8th, an Administration Democrat, Henry L. Acker, editor of Democratic Standard Office,<sup>39</sup> and postmaster at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to Hunter vividly setting forth the chief difficulty of the Democratic party in that state. "Pennsylvania," he declared, "would decide the next election." He believed the Democratic party would carry it but "its solution rests with the United States Senate of which you are the honored member. I refer to the Tariff Bill now under consideration in committee of which you are chairman. With its solution depends the success or defeat of the Democratic party, nay, more—I verily believe that it will defeat it for years to come, and may, indeed, result in influencing the destruction of our glorious Union by elevating sectional discord. If a proper Tariff bill passes the United States Senate, it will make a difference of 20,000 votes in Pennsylvania, to the Democratic party. If it is defeated, we cannot hope to succeed. This is conceded by all who know the feelings of the people." Such were also the opinions in substance of President Buchanan to Alexander H. Stephens about this time.

The writer pleaded that the South concede a little on the tariff and thereby save the Keystone to Democracy on whom so much depended. "The masses of this state think and speak of nothing else but the tariff." The fate of the bill involved, he held, both the party and the country. To compromise would be the work of patriotism. The following letter showed Buchanan, from his own position at least, thoroughly

grasped the possibilities of a reconvened convention of "bogus" Douglas delegates.

To R. Tyler.

Washington,<sup>40</sup> 13th June, 1860

My Dear Sir:

Do you wish me to place the letter of Captain Maddox to yourself on file? Also that of Mr. Iverson to him?

I am sure that you will think I ought occasionally to make an appointment according to my own wishes and judgment. I know the officers of the marine corps tolerably well, and I intend to exercise this privilege upon the present occasion. Although S—— has not yet been removed, nor is it yet ascertained that he will be a defaulter, yet the applications are already numerous for his place. *Your friend M—will never be behind in this race.*

I return Mr. Campbell's letter according to your request. Immediately upon its receipt I spoke to the Secretary of War upon the subject, and he informed me that the rule as to the length of time a surgeon should remain at West Point had been changed, and that Dr. Campbell was the first whom this change had affected. He gave me strong reasons for the change, which I have not time to repeat. His successor, Dr. Hammond, has seen much hard service in New Mexico and our remote frontiers. So says Gov. Floyd, who informs me it is too late to recall Dr. Hammond's appointment. I am sorry I did not know the facts in



time. I believe the service of a surgeon at West Point has been reduced to two years.

I have hardly time now to say my prayers. Should they succeed at Baltimore in rejecting the regular delegates from the seceding States and admitting those who are "*bogus*," then Douglas will or may be nominated. In that event the unity and strength of the Democratic party is annihilated and Lincoln elected. This is not the worst. The Democratic party will be divided and sectionalized, and that too on the slavery issue. Everything looks bad, not only for the party, but for the country. The information from New York is not very encouraging.

In haste, always sincerely your friend,

James Buchanan

P. S. I hope you will be to see us ere long and stop at my house if you like the entertainment.

Phila:<sup>41</sup> June 14 (1860)

My dear Sir,

I feel greatly indebted to you for your kind letter of this morning. I presume Capt. Maddox would desire his letter to me & Mr. Wesson's to him to be regarded as mere private communications.

I observed that some *Southern* men—no, not *men*—politicians—voted with the Abolitionists on yesterday in their false and slanderous Resolutions; & that others did not vote at all. The idea of Southern men joining these ruffians against *you* in such a manifestation of partisan malice and villainy, excites my bitter-

est anger & indignation,—ungrateful dogs or shortsighted fools? I am afraid, had I the hanging of these fellows, their shrift would be short.

The New York Delegation wish to present to the South & the Admn the alternative of Douglass or Seymour, but I fancy they will in the end be satisfied with an assured promise of a fair share of spoils.

I had a note yesterday from Peter Cagger.<sup>42</sup> He is *mighty* for Douglass, but he says he (Cagger) *will try to see me*. My conviction is that he is for Gov. Seymour. Should we meet I will ascertain this before we part, should such be the case.

With the greatest respect & regard

Your sincere friend

Ro: Tyler

His Ecly

James Buchanan

The elder Tyler likewise wrote that he found many had so great a dislike of Douglas that they would not listen to talk of fusion. Bell, he thought, was likely to carry Virginia. He criticized the tactics of the South at Charleston, holding that they had played the game badly. He held that they ought to have nominated a candidate who needed no platform, or failing that, should have seceded "*universally*" at once and set up their platform and candidate immediately after. The future did not appear bright.

In referring to Buchanan's only campaign address, in which he had supported the principle of the Dred Scott case, he wrote:

"The President, in his late speech<sup>43</sup>, has acquitted himself well. You did right to preserve silence. He has been uniformly polite to you, and for that I thank him, but he is altogether *your debtor*. No one has been so true to him or rendered him greater service. Heretofore he could not have spared you from your position in Pennsylvania; but now his political days are numbered, and his sand nearly run. He might now reciprocate by rendering you service. Will he volunteer to do it? Or, having the orange, will he throw the rind away? Nous verrons. I may do him injustice in regarding him as a mere politician without heart. I hope I am mistaken."<sup>44</sup>

By August Tyler wrote his son that the country was undoubtedly in an alarming condition. "While I think you are too bitter on Douglas, yet, I consider his course, and that of his friends, unfortunate." Bell was gaining ground in Virginia, but the division of the Democrats left little to hope for. Tyler was pessimistic of the future of the Republic.

In August he discussed fusion possibilities with Henry S. Foote<sup>45</sup> and his son. He indicated the possibility that Breckinridge would carry Lane with him by pluralities in enough Southern States to place his name before the Senate in case Lincoln did not receive enough of the popular vote.

Anxiety was felt for Pennsylvania on which so much again depended. By September the situation in Pennsylvania had gone from bad to worse. The Ex-President wrote urgently for information on New

Jersey and the Keystone. Maine indicated an increasing swing of votes toward the Republicans. Seward, he thought, plotted some form of political mischief to injure the South. By October, Virginia was feeling a depression due to political forebodings. New York might still join the ranks of the fused Democrats and save the day, but such an idea was based more on hope than on expectation. By November tenth, the worst was known. "South Carolina," the elder Tyler predicted, "will secede."<sup>46</sup> The rest was veiled in uncertainty. Opinion in Virginia was divided. Public confidence was dwindling and metal money would soon be hoarded.

It was the knell of the old regime, but hope still lingered. Perhaps the older men could still save the Union by another compromise. At least it would be a noble and heroic task. But the radicals were now in a pivotal position and were found, in the last analysis, to have the ear of the President-elect in the critical days to come. Pennsylvania had gone into the ranks of the Republicans while in Virginia, the Democrats had been defeated by the followers of Bell.

## Chapter VI

## SECESSION AND REUNION

Caleb Cushing, Tyler's friend of former days, in an eloquent address at Newburyport, vainly tried to stay the fanaticism in Massachusetts. To Tyler, this was another omen of the evil days that had fallen upon the land.<sup>1</sup> Still he did not give up hope. President Buchanan with statesmanlike wisdom, opposed coercion as bad policy and likely to make matters worse. Public opinion was swinging in a direction of a compromise and John J. Crittenden brought forward his famous compromise measures which, could they have been placed before the voters at the psychological moment, would have saved the Union and averted the war. After the secession of South Carolina Buchanan and the moderates turned their attention towards salvaging the border states where a desire for independence was not as strong but where antipathy toward the idea of coercion was very marked. To them as well as the President the principle of coercion was contrary to their ideas of the meaning of the Constitution and the principles of 1798.

Tyler wrote of Buchanan's policy of restraint on January 1st:

"No ray of light yet appears to dispel the gloom which has settled upon the country. In the meantime the President pursues a wise and statesmanlike course. A blow struck would be the signal for the united action with the slave States, whereas the grain States of the border are sincerely desirous of reconciling matters and thereby preserving the Union."<sup>2</sup>

Truer words were never spoken. Lincoln's call for volunteers from the border States was the last straw. Most of them pre-emptorily refused to send their quotas, while North Carolina and Virginia with their vast resources made common cause with the Confederacy. No better justification for the sagacity of Tyler and the statesmanship of Buchanan is needed than these plain facts.

To Robert Tyler the times seemed propitious to rid the union of the New England states, a thought not restricted to himself even in Pennsylvania. Among those who wrote favorably of the idea was the able and honest George W. Woodward,<sup>3</sup> Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Robert Tyler's hope is expressed to his friend, Jeremiah Sullivan Black, who had succeeded Cass as Secretary of State. The letter was written just after Buchanan had refused to return Major Anderson to Fort Moultrie.

*Private*

Phila; Jan'y 2, 1861

My excellent friend,

Inasmuch as the *State of Pennsylvania* will assuredly wish to secede from the Northern Confederacy (composed principally of *Free trade* states, New York and the North West) before this day 12 Months, take care about what you do in this South Carolina business.

Yours friend,

Ro. Tyler<sup>4</sup>

The private letters cease during these days but public letters leave no uncertainty of Robert Tyler's position. Three days later his views on the crisis appeared at length in a letter to James Gibbons which was published in the columns of the *Pennsylvanian*, Buchanan's Philadelphia organ. With an accuracy worthy of Calhoun he depicted the terrible effect of a war upon constitutional liberty and the sovereignty of the state.

LETTER FROM ROBERT TYLER,<sup>5</sup> ESQ.

Philadelphia, January 5, 1861.

To JAMES GIBBONS, Esq.—My Dear Sir:—I will endeavor to answer your friendly letter on the points indicated, as briefly and distinctly as possible.

You are quite correct in supposing that I earnestly deprecate a sentiment of hostility to the Union, if

entertained and expressed in a wanton spirit of destructiveness or in a prurient desire for a mere change of political condition. But should the Government of the Union ever be perverted into an instrument of oppression and insult to the people of Pennsylvania, I should unhesitatingly denounce it and oppose it with the most unrelenting enmity. I am now attached to the Union, because so far from having attacked our rights in this State or injured our prosperity, it has greatly promoted our interests and happiness. Should it be permanently disorganized in such a manner as to render a reconstruction impossible, I should consider such an event as the most lamentable tragedy the human race has ever witnessed since the world was created.

As regards the second point of your enquiry, I am aware that it requires some courage to meet the unpopularity, under existing circumstances, of an explicit declaration in favor of the doctrine of the right of a State or States peaceably to withdraw from the Union for a cause or causes of which the people of such State or States are and of necessity must be the sole judges. I might enter here into an elaborate exposition of the political principles involved in this proposition. But it would be both puerile and unprofitable to waste time in arguing a question of Constitutional construction, when we are already in the presence of the stern reality of a great, indisputable Fact, that no longer waits upon such discussion. Revolution is upon us, and unless it be immediately arrested, it must be

consummated by reaching, inevitably, one of two results. Should the Revolution not be arrested, the only question left us to consider is, what direction shall it take? Shall the result be in favor of Liberty, or in favor of Power? Shall the Revolution be accomplished in Peace, or shall it be stained with the fratricidal blood of civil conflict? In other words, is it best that the States be permitted, really or virtually, to separate without force or the invocation of murderous passions, and to fall back into the position they occupied before the Constitution was established, or shall the Revolution be used as an instrument to blot out the State sovereignties, wherein are to be found the original sources of the liberties of our citizens, and to establish a military Despotism in the interest of Centralized and Imperial authority?

For one, I infinitely prefer the first to the last. I can refer you to a striking precedent to sustain the patriotism and good sense of such a view of the subject on the mere ground of expediency. Our ancestors fought the war of Independence with England—under the articles of confederation. But immediately after the Treaty of Peace, many of the States expressed dissatisfaction with the Government, and declared themselves unwilling to remain longer in the Confederacy. They did not go to war with each other, nor did the Continental Congress threaten them with the sword, but they wisely agreed to separate without bloodshed, and the consequence was that steps were soon taken (at the particular instance of Virginia) for a re-con-

struction of the Government, which led to the formation of the present Union, in which we have so wonderfully prospered for three quarters of a century. Is it not possible, or even probable, that a similar result might again be produced under similar circumstances? But whether there would be a re-construction of the Government or not, in the event of a peaceable dissolution of our system, it is impossible for mortal man to conceive any worse Government than would be that of the present Union when revolutionized under the lead of a political party into a military Dictatorship or despotism, in which, with the certainty of mathematical calculation, the independence of each State and the priceless freedom of every citizen is now protected by the Constitution and the laws, would be overwhelmed and subordinated by the combined force and corruptions of armed and consolidated power.

I thus designedly present the question as a purely practical one. We must all sooner or later take one side or the other of this issue. Now I am clearly of opinion that one battle field between the belligerent States, or between the Federal Government and the seceding States, would render re-construction of the government impossible on the one hand, while it would surely indicate a civil war, tending to a military despotism, on the other. I do not believe the patriots and freemen who made the Constitution ever intended, directly or indirectly, to grant the power to the Federal Government to make war upon a State, and to crush the people beneath the weight of a military yoke. I

am therefore unalterably opposed to coercion as some persons daintily describe the act of civil war.

But the idea of one section of sixteen States conquering and restraining in bondage the other section of fifteen States, with garrisons in every town, and with cannon bristling around every Postoffice and Custom House—as Austria now possesses Venetia—is the witless thought of an idiot. Thus, whether a State may peaceably secede, presents an issue that Pennsylvania should not determine too hastily. The near future may possibly indicate a complication, should she be forced into a purely Northern confederacy, that may make this now repudiated doctrine, a moral tower of strength to her, in a measure, she may then be compelled to take looking to her self preservation.

To your enquiry, whether, in my opinion, the present distractions of the Country may not be in some way compromised and settled, I am glad to believe that it is yet barely possible to avert a dissolution of the Confederacy. But no half way compromise or concession, much less any piece of political trickery will afford, in my judgment, a satisfactory solution. The real parties in this controversy are the Republican or anti slavery party of the Northern States, and the whole people of the Southern section, with the unimportant exception of a few submissionists here and there. If the Republican party, exhibiting unanimity of purpose and acting in good faith, shall speedily agree, through their representatives at Washington, to concede the use and enjoyment of the common Terri-

tories to the citizens of the slave-holding States, without the slightest restrictions as regards any species of property; and further agree to such other guarantees affecting the general subject of negro slavery as shall hereafter render an anti-slavery political party impossible in the United States, the peace of the country and integrity of the Union, unquestionably, might yet be preserved. Unless this be done I conscientiously think that the revolution will assuredly take its painful course.

It should be borne in mind that the various concessions and compromises in times of difficulty and danger to the Union, have heretofore ALL originated with the South and the Democratic party. Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia gave their broad Territories to the States of the Union, in and about 1787. The Missouri Compromise was conceived and passed through Congress by the Southern States, as an evidence of their devoted loyalty to the Union, in the memorable year of 1819. The Southern States and the Democratic party, assisted by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, then enlisted under the patriotic banner of the Democracy, tranquillized the country after a hard contest with Gov. Seward and the Anti-Slavery party of the Free States, by means of the Compromise measures of 1850. I therefore trust that the Republican party, claiming to represent the North, will not longer insist that the cause of the Union is not worth a real concession, and abnegating their patriotism and common sense at the same moment, will not adopt the irra-

tional cry, "No more compromises; no more concessions." But should the Republican party resolve to pursue this policy, the whole people of the Free States must deliberately make a choice between the Anti-Slavery Platform and the perpetuity of the Union.

In conclusion, let me assure you, my dear sir, that I have not the least idea of leaving Pennsylvania. I have been a citizen of this State for seventeen years. I owe a debt of unceasing gratitude to the State for having given me my dear wife. My only son is a native of Bucks county, and my other children, with one exception, were born here. I have two children lying by the side of their maternal grandfather in the Church-yard at Bristol. I do not possess any pecuniary interest whatever outside of this State, and after enjoying the hospitality and favors of the people of Pennsylvania for so many years, I stand perfectly ready to encounter my share of any troubles or misfortunes that may now arise. I may differ, perhaps, temporarily, with a large majority in my political views, but I would sacrifice as much as any other citizen for the honor and dignity of the good old Commonwealth.

Very truly, your friend,

ROBERT TYLER.

James Gibbons, Esq.

Within a week Robert Tyler wrote a second letter to John Samuel, a like-minded Democrat on the futility of preserving liberty and the Spirit of the existing Union by the sword.

Philadelphia,<sup>a</sup> January 14, 1861

I have had the honor to receive a letter signed by Mr. Vincent L. Bradford, Chairman, and by Mr. Cotti and yourself, Secretaries of the Committee, inviting me to address a public meeting to be held on Wednesday evening next, at National Hall. I thank you for the invitation, while it is a matter of regret to me that I am so situated as not to be able to accept it. You describe the object of the meeting to be "to oppose the use of coercion towards our brethren of the Southern States, and to express our sense of the wickedness and folly of endeavoring to maintain the Union of these States by force." I most cordially approve of your explicit declaration in this respect. I regard any man who deliberately advises a civil war, for any purpose whatsoever or on any pretence, between the two great sections of the Confederacy, as being a cowardly ruffian who would never personally participate in its perils, but who, in a spirit of mean malevolence, would gratify a cruel temper by injuring others, and by rendering our country and the cause of Republican Freedom a spectacle of shame, pity, and contempt for all mankind.

I shall not now trouble you with any observations on the right of a State peaceably to withdraw

from the Union, involving, as it does, the whole question of State sovereignty, and the whole subject of the meaning and character of the Federal Constitution. The admitted principle underlying our theory of Government is, that rightful Government exists only by the consent of the governed. In view of this principle, it never could have been intended that one-half the States of the present Union should be compelled, by armed violence, to submit to such a perverted construction of the powers of the Government as they sincerely believed to be in violation of the Constitution, and destructive of their best interests and safety. Nor is it just or rational to maintain that ten millions of people who have become generally dissatisfied with a government they deem oppressive and menacing to their property and liberties, shall be first denied a redress of their grievances, of which they complain, and then be subjugated by force of arms and reduced to political and social slavery.

But it is idle to suppose that one section could ever conquer the other. We should never obtain even a technical triumph in such a contest. A reconstruction of the Union would then become impossible. It would even be difficult to adjust advantageous business and commercial relations. I deplore a dissolution of the Confederacy, but if the Republican or Abolition party will not permit the free and slave States to live together in the close bonds of the Union, let us agree

to separate in peace and with as little injury to each other as possible.

Very respectfully, your friend and serv't,  
ROBERT TYLER

To John Samuel,<sup>7</sup> Esq.

Ex-President Tyler now determined to use all his influence toward healing the breach between the sections. It was a worthy effort, worthy of better results, for madness ruled the hour. In 1833 it had been Tyler, who, more than any other man, by his association with Clay and Calhoun, had brought about the Compromise Tariff which prevented hostilities. Once more the old Dominion would play the role of mediator in the persons of Judge Robertson and John Tyler. On the nineteenth of January the Virginia legislature by joint resolution sent the former to South Carolina and the latter to Washington to take every reasonable means to avert a permanent dissolution of the Union.

On the 23rd he reached the capital and made haste to seek an interview with President Buchanan.

Washington City<sup>8</sup>  
Brown's Hotel  
Jan:23, 1861

Dear Sir

I take the earliest moment to apprise you of my arrival in this City, in charge of the feelings and wishes of the Legislature of Virginia which have in



view the preservation of the peace of the Country, and under instructions to communicate them to your Excellency to indicate the time when it would be agreeable to you to receive me, and thereby enable me to acquit myself of the city which has been thus impos'd upon me

I have the honor to be

With/the highest consideration

His Ex: & respect

James Buchanan Your most Obt. Servant  
President of the U. States John Tyler

(Indorsed—after brief of contents—)

Answd the same evening  
it was received kindly &  
cordially declaring I would  
receive him at any time  
Mr Tylers reply of same  
evening

Tuesday evening<sup>9</sup>

My Dear Sir,

Accept my thanks for your prompt and cordial reply to my note— My health is too delicate to make it prudent to encounter the night air—but I will avail myself of your permission to call upon you in the morning.

Sincerely and faithfully

Yrs

John Tyler

The President

The following day ex-President Tyler reported his arrival to Governor Letcher as follows:

Confidential<sup>10</sup>

Washington City

January 24, 1861.

My dear Sir:

I reached here last evening and have waited on the President this morning. After a conversation which lasted an hour and a half I left him to call again tomorrow morning.

The probability now is that he would communicate the resolutions of the legislature to Congress in a special message recommending *entire abstinence* from all action until Virginia shall have exhausted all efforts of adjustment.

This recommendation is equivalent on his part, and if conveyed in decisive terms, is all we require. Besides giving this effort of Virginia's a broad circulation through the country, invested with greater force—I call again at ten tomorrow and shall then most probably see a sketch of the proposed message.

In haste

Most truly yrs.

John Tyler

P. S. I have written to Judge Robertson.

Friday Evening<sup>11</sup>  
Jan. 25, 1861

My Dear Sir,

The enclosed Telegraphic Despatch is this moment received— May I be permitted to hope that it is based on an unfounded report— If not, will you do me the favour to inform me on what day the Brooklyn sailed, and whether she has recruits for any Southern Port? and if so which?

With high regard

Yrs Most Truly

John Tyler

The President

(The despatch is dated Charleston Jan. 25/61

To Hon John Tyler

Presidents House

Will you succeed— We hear the Brooklyn has sailed with troops are they destined against the South? Reply immedy

John Robertson

(Indorsement on this:<sup>12</sup>

Same day. Answd in

handwriting of Gen. Dix)

25. January 1861

My dear Sir:—

I have just received your note. The orders were given to the Brooklyn, I believe, on Monday or Tuesday last, certainly before your arrival in this City.

She goes on an errand of mercy & relief. If she had not been sent, it would have been an abandonment of our highest duty. Her movements are in no way connected with South Carolina.

Your friend

very respectfully

James Buchanan

(Very faint signature)

Letter in a clerk's hand, probably a copy.

His Excellency<sup>13</sup>

John Tyler

Browns Hotel<sup>13</sup>

Friday

Prest. Buchanan

Dear Sir—

I hasten to enclose you the Telegram of which I spoke— Please return it when read— By it I think you will perceive *their* action depends on *yours*—

Pardon me for urging again upon you as I did this morning, the propriety of withdrawing the troops—a step which would certainly be taken if the Fort was situated in the Canadas and a war prevailed with Great Britain— After all it is but permitting it to be held by those for whose protection it was erected—

Most faithfully Yrs

John Tyler

To Buchanan the policy of Tyler and of the State of Virginia was a ray of hope and a measure of relief. Public opinion, artificially stimulated, had applauded Anderson's move into Fort Sumter and created a situation which Buchanan expected might lead to hostilities. He now had the hoped for opportunity to go back to his convention scheme of December. A convention, Buchanan believed, was the ideal convocation to settle the crisis. It would also serve to postpone action until the public North and South had time for its "sober second thought." Meanwhile the Republicans who, in Buchanan's mind, were to blame for all this trouble would come into power. Many people in Washington trusted in the cleverness of Seward to get the country and the Republicans out of the difficulties in which their Chicago platform had placed them.

The next day the ex-President wrote to his colleague, Judge Robertson, of the sailing and destination of the Brooklyn.<sup>14</sup>

On the same day the following item appeared in the *Pennsylvanian*.<sup>15</sup>

#### LETTER OF EX-PRESIDENT TYLER

The Richmond (Va.) Whig publishes a very able and patriotic letter from the venerable Ex-President, John Tyler, on the troubles of the times, in which he expresses a warm attachment to the Union, but main-

tains, with remarkable force and clearness of argument, the rights and sovereignty of the States. He does not despair of the Union, but sees much cause for solicitude and apprehension. He says, "If we cannot live together, let us part in peace,"—a sentiment which is fast gaining ground, even among those who at first advocated the dangerous and deadly doctrine of "coercion." His letter concludes thus:—

"If I may be permitted to make a suggestion, it would be, that the Legislature without delay, and without interference with the call of a Convention, might inaugurate a meeting of the Border States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri, slave States, and New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, free States, through two Commissioners to be appointed by each, to arrange, if possible, a programme of adjustment to be submitted to the other States, as conclusive of the whole matter. Should they agree, I think their recommendations would be followed by the other States, and incorporated into the Constitution and placed on the footing of an unalterable compact. Surely no States can be more deeply interested in the work of restoring the country to quiet and harmony. If they cannot agree, then it may safely be concluded that the restoration of peace and concord has become impossible. I would have an early day appointed for the meeting of the Commissioners, to be appointed by the Governors or Legislatures if in session, so that Virginia, when she holds her Convention, may be in full possession of the result.

All other efforts having failed, then I would advise, as a dernier measure, a Convention of all the Southern States, and after incorporating upon the present Constitution guarantees going not one iota beyond what strict justice and the security of the South require, adopt the Constitution of the United States as it now is, and give a broad invitation to the other States to enter our Union with the old flag flying over one and all. When this is done, I would say in conclusion to all my countrymen, rally back in all speed to the Constitution, thus invigorated and strengthened, and let this for all time to come be written on every heart as a motto, that under all circumstances and in every condition of things, there is but one post of safety, and that is to stand by the Constitution."

That the ex-President thought the Brooklyn's trip ill advised is indicated in his letter to Governor Letcher on the 27th.

Washington 42 after 9 p. m.  
January 27, 1861

My dear Sir:

I have nothing to communicate of any moment. Everyone is in the great expectation of the result of the Brooklyn's trip. She is destined to Pensacola and the worst result is feared. I regret exceedingly that a telegraphic dispatch from me to Judge Robertson at 9 o'clock yesterday has failed to reach him. I also dispatched a duplicate a moment ago which, if it does not share the fate of its predecessor, will quiet things in Charleston.

Pray have you noticed that they are planting guns in the parapet at Old Point looking landward? When Virginia is attempting to mediate and trying to bring about an adjustment there, people here point their guns at us as if we were a public enemy.

I am very desirous of leaving this atmosphere where lunacy rather than sound statesmanship prevails. I, however, shall do it while there remains the possibility of doing any good.

In much haste

John Tyler

Gov. Letcher<sup>16</sup>

Brown's Hotel<sup>17</sup>

Jan'y 28th 1861

My Dear Sir;

I leave the City to morrow morning for the brief interval that elapses between this and the meeting of the (Peace) Commissioners on the 4th February—, In making my adieux, which I would do in person but for engagements which prevent, I desire to express my pleasure at hearing your message read to day in the Senate, and to tender to you my acknowledgements for the facilities you have afforded me of acquitting myself of the mission with which my State entrusted me, I feel but one regret in all that has occurred and that is in the sailing of the Brooklyn under orders issued before my arrival in this City—I hope, however, that she sailed with such instructions as, if followed, will prevent any Collision—There is nothing

that I more sincerely desire than that your administration may close amid the rejoicing of a great people, at the consummation of the work of a renew'd and more harmonious Confederacy—

Will you pardon me for calling your attention to the rumour contained in the newspapers of the morning which state that active proceedings are in Course of execution at Fortress Monroe, in planting Cannon upon the land side of the Fort with their Muzzles turned landward and overlooking the Country—If this be so Mr. President, is such proceeding either appropriate or well timed? I shall do no more than call your attention to the circumstance and leave it without comment, with this single remark that when Virginia is making every possible effort to redeem and save the Union it is seemingly ungracious to have Cannon levelled at her bosom—

With my most cordial wish for your success in steering the Ship of State amid the Critical relations of the Country

I am my dear Sir

Truly & faithfully yours

John Tyler

The President of the U States

Washington 28 January 1861

My dear Sir/

I have received your note of this evening & am happy to learn that you were pleased at hearing my message to day in the Senate. It expresses my sincere

& cordial sentiments. My best wishes attend you on your journey home & and for your safe return to this City on the 4th February.<sup>18</sup> I shall then hope to see more of you.

I shall make it a point to inquire tomorrow morning into the rumors in the Newspapers to which you refer in relation to Fortress Monroe

Yours very respectfully

James Buchanan

His Excellency John Tyler<sup>19</sup>

President Buchanan brought Secretary of War Holt's attention to the rumor which, upon the latter's investigation proved to be without foundation.

Tyler returned to Washington, according to Doctor Lyon G. Tyler, Sunday, February 3rd, but does not state the time. The following letter undated may refer to a Sunday later in the month.

Sunday morning

My Dear Sir;

I have risen with a head ache this morning and Mrs. Tyler with so bad a cold that she speaks only in a whisper. We have therefore to nurse ourselves to be in any degree prepar'd for our duties to morrow— We can only express our sincere regret at being depriv'd by these untoward circumstances of the great pleasure we had promis'd ourselves of dining with you informally to day—

Truly & faithfully Yrs

John Tyler

The President<sup>20</sup>

On Monday, February 4th, the Convention opened. Tyler was fittingly elected to preside over the deliberation and gave an able address. Both he and Buchanan, as we have seen, earnestly did what could be done to keep the status quo, although Buchanan would give no pledges. It was the last stand of the Old Guard. Stiff-necked young men prevailed and Tyler had to go home discouraged and broken-hearted to bid the Old Dominion prepare for the worst.

This date ought to be the 6th. Brown's Hotel  
I see them on the 7th at  
11 o'clock Feb. 7, 1861  
My Dear Sir:

The gentlemen composing the Convention of Commissioners from the several States now holding their sessions in this City, desire to pay you their respects, and have instructed me to ascertain what hour would best suit your pleasure to receive them.

I am Dr Sir

With high respect

Yrs Most Truly

The President  
of the U. States

John Tyler<sup>21</sup>  
Pres. of the Convention

(Endorsement in Secretary's hand, merely briefing)

At this Conference Buchanan urged the members of the Convention to form amendments giving the

South security to her domestic institutions in the future and to save the country from a "bloody, fratricidal" war.<sup>22</sup> He believed it his duty to do all he honestly could to stave off such a conflict and give time for public opinion to return to a more sensible condition of mind.

Colonel Hayne of South Carolina who had come to Washington to secure the surrender of Fort Sumter had failed. He had sent a "highly improper letter" to Buchanan who refused to receive it.<sup>23</sup> Hayne became much excited and claimed that he was insulted. Desiring to prevent hostile acts by Governor Pickens of South Carolina, Tyler called on Buchanan<sup>24</sup> the same day who authorized him to telegraph Governor Pickens that he had no intention of insulting Hayne. Again Tyler urged Buchanan to evacuate Fort Sumter. Buchanan had made up his mind that he could not afford to order the evacuation of the fort and politely refused the suggestion as he had done before.

Upon leaving the President Tyler promptly telegraphed Governor Pickens. The Governor replied that the whole matter had been referred to the newly established Confederate government at Montgomery and that everything consistent with honor had been done to avoid bloodshed at Charleston.<sup>25</sup> The substance of this message Tyler then communicated to President Buchanan as follows:

Saturday Evening<sup>26</sup>

My Dear Sir;

I communicated to Gov. Pickens what pass'd between us as to Mr. Holt's letter and I am happy to say that the reply recd. a moment ago leaves me no ground to fear any early disturbance— The whole subject is refer'd to the Convention at Montgomery as I plainly infer— The conclusion is in these words— "Every thing which can be done consistently with the honor and safety of this State to avoid collision and bloodshed, has been and will be the purpose of the authorities here"

Thus my Dear Sir the inquietude you expressed may be dismissed—

Very Truly &amp; faithfully Yrs

John Tyler

The President

But it was not 1833. There were new men of strong passions and hardened hearts who knew not and cared not for the ways of the fathers. Webster, Clay, and Calhoun were dead. Buchanan still lived, but his long and friendly association with the Southern leaders had been used against him by Republican newspapers at the North.<sup>27</sup> Then malicious propaganda had greatly injured his influence in his own section at a time when it would have been well to have taken heed to his earnest and experienced counsel.

The following notes and telegrams were caused by a rumor which reached President Buchanan to the

effect that Governor Pickens was urging an immediate attack on Sumter.

Tuesday

My Dr. Sir

I do not believe a word of it— This last despatch from Judge Robertson is wholly different. I am at the moment so engag'd that I can not hasten to you— I will as soon as I can—

Respy Yrs Frd

John Tyler

The President<sup>28</sup>

Wednesday

My Dear Sir,

I despatched the telegram at about 5 o'clock No answer yet— Perhaps it was referd to Montgomery or time may not have been given to respond before the close of the office. A consultation of Cabinet may have been required— In short many things of a similiar nature may have occurrd— Genl. Davis will be written to to day— No attack can be made without orders from Montgomery

Truly Yrs

John Tyler

The President<sup>29</sup>

2 O'Clock P. M.  
February 20 1861

My Dear Sir:

I have this moment recd a Telegram from Charleston. The Gov. says "recd. your message—know nothing about the report you speak of—No one is authorized to speak for me things must stand without any movement in force"

I would send the despatch but the latter part of it relates to another matter—

Truly & Sincerely

Yr Frd.

John Tyler

The President<sup>30</sup>

President Tyler thought that the military activities of Scott and Holt in bringing troops to Washington were ill calculated to aid his work of keeping the peace. He inquired of Buchanan upon the advisability of having a large military parade at such a time. Buchanan replied as follows:

Washington 22 February 1861

My dear Sir/

I find it impossible to prevent two or three companies of the Federal troops here from joining in the procession to day with the volunteers of the District without giving serious offence to the line of Thousands of the people who have assembled to witness the parade. The day is the anniversary of Washing-

tons birth—a festive occasion throughout the land & it has been particularly marked by the House of Representatives. These troops every where else join such processions in honor of the birth day of the father of his Country & it would be hard to assign a good reason why they should be excluded from the privilege in the Capitol founded by himself. They are here simply as a posse comitatus to aid the civil authority in case of need. Besides, the programme was published in the National Intelligencer of this morning without my knowledge\*

from your friend

very respectfully

President Tyler<sup>31</sup>

James Buchanan<sup>32</sup>

\*the War Department having considered the celebration of this national anniversary by the military arm of the Government as a matter of course

My dear Sir

Of course there can be no objection felt by this convention or for myself individually

Truly & faithfully

Yours

John Tyler

Feb 22—1861<sup>32</sup>—



Buchanan's reliance upon Tyler's influence to keep the peace and hopes that the Peace Convention would solve the country's problems are mirrored in Secretary Holt's letter to Mayor Anderson on February 23rd. The letter told Anderson to continue to act as he had been doing, strictly in the defensive. Buchanan now believed that the direction of affairs at Charleston had now been transferred to the Confederate government at Montgomery. That government, he thought, would try to negotiate with Washington and meanwhile peace would prevail. Concerning the Peace Conference, Holt's letter read, "The labors of the Peace Congress have not yet closed and the presence of that body here adds another to the powerful motives already existing for the adoption of every measure, except a necessary defense, of avoiding a collision with the forces that surround you."<sup>33</sup>

Browns Hotel

Feb 24 1861

My Dear Sir;

I think you may rely upon tranquility at the South—Since you left me I have made particular enquiries—Genl Davis has been written to and will be written to— He is advised to send a Commissioner<sup>34</sup> and to go to Charleston himself to represent and quiet all things— In fact from information from one directly from Richmond and who travelled with merchants from the South going North the probability is that he is now in Charleston. The fact may probably

be announced in the papers to morrow— Every one that I have seen secessionists and others concur with myself in the improbability of any movement until a Commissioner shall come on here and a failure in the mission—

Truly & faithfully yrs

John Tyler

The President

During these months of Conference and hope, Wise, still at odds with Buchanan, allowed the "Enquirer" to attack the Administration while he talked of fighting a revolution inside the Union. Here again in a slightly different form was the idea of cutting off certain abolitionized states in the North. Wise merely gave the idea a new twist when he talked of waging war under the old flag for the maintenance of Southern rights.

In the United States Senate, Hunter ever moderate and sensible—values too often unappreciated in the South—strove for reasonable security against possible Republican attacks upon Southern interests. At the same time he preached co-operation and urged Virginia, if worst came to worst, to stand shoulder to shoulder with her brethren of the Cotton Kingdom. He believed the economic advantages would be greater for his old state if such a course were followed. Coercion, he knew, meant despotism. Hence, he tried to hope that the sanity of the people would prevent hostilities, but he could scarcely convince himself,

much less others who were ready to fling the sword on the scale of adjustment. He also expressed hopes that a *new union* or alliance would arise between the two groups of States with domestic affairs forever separate, and foreign affairs in common. But as spring drew near, the hopelessness of the situation became more and more apparent.

Lincoln's inauguration came. His addresses had not given any real satisfaction to the South in spite of certain fine phrases. While it showed that Lincoln would hesitate in invading the interior regions he would probably recover forts and other federal property in the South. Seward, however, was of a different mind. From Judge Connor's *Life of Justice Campbell* and other sources it would seem he was ready to evacuate Sumter on the ground of military security provided he could lay the blame on the Buchanan regime. At the same time he hoped to hold Fort Pickens. Lincoln on his own responsibility gave *an order* to re-enforce the fort from a warship lying off the harbor. This not only disturbed the status quo but as Professor Dwight Dummond has stated, was an act of war. Since the order was not delivered to the proper authorities the conflict was temporarily postponed. Meanwhile Lincoln wavered over the problem of sending additional troops to relieve Fort Sumter. He rightly feared the loss of Virginia. But at last he acceded to the wishes of his radical supporters and attempted to send troops to Charleston. It was in the quiet tentative days of March that Robert Tyler wrote

a letter in which he depicted very clearly the unenviable position in which the South found itself.

Letter from Robert Tyler, Esq.

Bristol, Bucks Co.,<sup>35</sup> Pa, March 15, 1861.

To JAMES GIBBONS, Esq:—

My Dear Sir:—I received your friendly letter several days ago, and although it would have given me pleasure to acknowledge your favor at an earlier moment, I have not found leisure to do so until this morning.

The substance of your inquiry is, whether, in my opinion, the evacuation of Fort Sumter as the first step in the line of the so-called Peace Policy, initiated by the joint efforts of Messrs. Seward, Douglas, and Crittenden, and accepted, as it is supposed, in a temper of sullen acquiescence by the Lincoln Cabinet, "will prevent the recession of the border slave states and lead to a reconstruction of the Union." No doubt this movement is in the right direction, since it would avoid an otherwise immediate collision at Charleston and Pensacola; but I must frankly add, in a spirit of candor you have a right to expect, that I do not believe anything contemplated to be done in carrying out the peace plan arranged, as I have reason to think, by the distinguished gentlemen I have named, will tend in the slightest degree to a reconstruction of the Union, or do more, should the people of the free States put their trust in its saving efficacy, than possibly to retard the ultimate secession of the Border Slave States.

This seems to me to be obvious on a bare statement of the case. It is said that Fort Sumter is to be surrendered, not as an act of volition by the Government at Washington, but as a matter of stern "military necessity." But even if it were surrendered of free choice as an act of intended conciliation, I could not escape the conclusion that its surrender would only be regarded as a gratifying treatment of an incidental point in the present controversy. It is manifest to all that the evacuation of the Southern forts, the abandonment of the coercive ideas of the Inaugural as regards the attempted collection of the revenues at ports of seceded States by force, the acknowledgment of the independence of the Confederate States, would still leave untouched or unsettled all those original issues which have produced our difficulties and divisions. These must be overcome by a scheme of concession and compromise equal to the urgent exigency of the occasion. In the event of the recognition of the independence of the Gulf States, the Government of Montgomery might cease to feel any particular interest in the mode of settlement of these issues, but you cannot fail to perceive that the Border States, being thus weakened in the Union, would necessarily become more deeply interested than ever in their proper and satisfactory disposition; looking to their future peace and security.

Now, in my judgment, without criticising motives, the pseudo peace plan of Messrs. Seward, Douglas and Crittenden only proposes to temporize with real ques-

tions that must be met, decided and settled permanently and on a perfectly safe basis.<sup>36</sup> With the feebly expressed hope of some constitutional amendment through the agency of a National Convention, I conscientiously think its chief effect will be, and perhaps its first object is, to demoralize the people of the Southern section, if it be possible to do it by such means; to mislead them with false expectations, and to prepare them, when thus rendered incapable of resistance, for final submission of Squatterism or Abolitionism, or both. I confess, however, that I shall be quite mistaken, if this policy of attempting to ignore vital issues by an ingenious postponement of their just demand, or of gaining "time," as I have seen it somewhat complacently stated, be productive of any other than evil and dangerous results. It is true that there is a submission or amancipation party in Virginia and the other border States. It is also true that the Federal patronage placed in the treacherous hands of the submission leaders may be successfully used to corrupt a poor devil or two, willing to accept spoils and preferment from a sectional party, still standing squarely on the Chicago platform of outrage and insult, which has arisen in power by the bitterest and most unsparing abuse of his State, its institutions and its people. But I feel perfectly assured that the great mass of the citizens of the Border States can neither be bought by offices, cajoled by soft words and indefinite promises, or bullied by threats of coercion and war. I cannot doubt this unless prepared to believe

that a majority of the people in the several Border States were desirous of sacrificing the great slaveholding interest in those States, for economical or merely political reasons. It would be absurd to suppose the majority of the people to be so unprincipled or so insane as this, in the pursuit of partisan power. There would be no precedent for such a silly and malevolent act in the history of nations since the world began. There are between a million and a half and two millions of negroes in the border States, and their lowest value may be reckoned at nearly a thousand millions of dollars. The land and houses possessed by the owners of these negroes are probably equal to three times the value of the slaves. The slaveholding interest thus embracing the enormous value of three or four thousand millions of dollars far transcends in importance any other interest in the limits of the border States, looking to their wealth, prosperity, stability and strength. It has never yet happened that any political party, in pursuit of platforms or offices, acting as the agent or ally of a foreign usurper, has ever attempted to establish an infamous supremacy by the unpatriotic sacrifices of such an interest as that of the slaveholders of Virginia and her sister Commonwealths, or if such an attempt were ever made, it was no doubt confronted with flashing steel, and put down on the battlefield.

There are two ways in which the seceded Southern States can be brought into Union with us, and by which the border States may be kept in their present

intimate relations with us. The first, now become a bare and remote possibility, is by satisfactory amendments, explanatory of the true meaning of the Constitution of the United States, which shall distinctly guarantee to the slave States peace and safety, independence and equality, as sovereign States in the Union. You are just as able to judge as I am, whether it is within the bounds of the most sanguine calculation to ever obtain such necessary amendments. To incorporate an amendment into the Constitution, counting the seceded States as still within the Confederacy, will require the assent of the Legislatures of all the remaining States, both slaveholding and non-slaveholding. When we come to reflect that seven States in the Senate voted against the Corwin amendment, and that sixty-four Republican Representatives in the House, being a majority of the Representatives of that party, also recorded their voices in the negative of that comparatively worthless proposition, it must be confessed that the prospect of having proper and satisfactory amendments to the Constitution is hopeless in the extreme. Is it not folly, indeed, to imagine the possibility of such a thing? A National Convention, composed of seven slave and of nineteen non-slaveholding States, would be apt to institute amendments against rather than in favor of a Southern construction of the Constitution.

But while the Constitution cannot be properly amended by a Northern or New England movement, there is fortunately another way in which reconstruc-

tion may be discovered to be feasible. This is by a it has been amended already by the Confederate Southern movement, and by taking the Constitution as States. They have adopted the Constitution, amended in one or two particulars for the better, and so far as the slavery question is concerned, as it has been always construed by the true Democratic Party. Should the Border States join the Southern Confederacy within one, two or three years, it would then become a most serious question to determine the political status of Pennsylvania and New Jersey in that relation. When that day comes, if Providence shall so order it, I shall hope to have a word to say upon the subject.

Very truly your friend,  
ROBERT TYLER.

James Gibbons, Esq.

Within a months time Fort Sumter fell and the North closed its divisions and fell under the spell of the magic slogan of saving the Union. Philadelphia like other cities was a place where it was not safe to express pro-South sentiments. Robert Tyler's life was threatened on or before April 17th. As we have seen he intended to stay in Pennsylvania but a mob forced him to leave Philadelphia and about May 11 he arrived in Richmond. He took it all with a dash of humor and resignation. He was thankful that at least he had no creditors among the savages. A little later his wife and children left Bristol and safely reached the home of

her father-in-law at Sherwood Forest. Her brother had for some years practiced engineering in Georgia. John Tyler, Jr. was already a clerk in the War Department at Montgomery. Robert Tyler became Register of the Southern Confederacy, declined a commission, but served as a private soldier in the "Treasury" Regiment in General Curtis Lee's brigade. He participated in actions about Richmond during the war. In 1864 he retreated with Davis southward taking leave of the President at Charlotte where the defeated head of the Confederacy told him further resistance was hopeless. Tyler's funds were gone but he had kept the faith. Ex-President Tyler had as a member of the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy also supported President Davis. The venerable Virginian died rather suddenly on January 18, 1862 while hopes for the success of the Confederacy were still in the hearts of its followers. His loyalty to his state and the Confederate cause was in full keeping with his well-known states rights views. Indeed he had been the only Senator to vote against Jackson's force bill of 1833. At that early time<sup>37</sup> he had publicly proclaimed in the terms of Jefferson, Taylor of Caroline, Upshur, and Calhoun that the Constitution was an international compact and the Union a league.

Back in Pennsylvania Buchanan had, like Pennsylvania, supported the war. He was somewhat embittered toward South Carolina and certain Southern leaders who had so troubled the last days of his administration. But for Virginia he felt only sorrow. Nor did

he forget Robert Tyler. A paragraph of a letter written to Lewis Coryell, a former supporter of Calhoun, in eastern Pennsylvania, reads as follows:

"Poor Bob Tyler! He was a warm hearted and eloquent man, and a true and faithful friend. I am truly sorry he went so far astray from his line of duty (Probably refers to his joining the Confederacy). I knew he was as poor as a church mouse and was too proud to obtain money by dishonorable means. I trust that the Democratic party everywhere may adopt strong resolutions . . . . in form of a vigorous prosecution of the war to restore the Union. This is the course of expediency, and what is of infinitely more importance, it is the course of our highest duty to our country. On this point there should be no division. To talk about peace and compromise when we know that the Confederate States would accept nothing less than a recognition of their independence is absurd. The Union must be restored and preserved if this is possible."<sup>38</sup>

At last the war ended and it came to Buchanan that Robert Tyler was now in very straightened circumstances. The following letter with Tyler's reply alone would in my opinion justify the study of the lives of these two men. Enemies had said that Buchanan was cold, close in money matters, and a heartless politician who cast aside his helpers when he no longer needed them. Here he was long past seventy, no longer on office seeker, his state gone hopelessly Republican, helping a Confederate soldier who had

stood by Jefferson Davis to the last ditch. Even when he was head of the state Central Committee of Pennsylvania, Robert Tyler, despite his loyalty and literary gifts could not withstand the depletion in the party's ranks. But he had ever been a loyal and faithful friend. Now he was in trouble, perhaps suffering. Buchanan took his quill in hand, drew a check on the Chemical Bank of New York and wrote the following letter. It for all times silences the carpings of his maligners and a noble testimony to his own character that deserves to live forever.

Wheatland, near Lancaster,<sup>39</sup>

3rd August, 1865

My dear Sir:

I have learned through our old friends, Baker and Owen Jones, that you now need the assistance of your friends, and I hasten to send you a check for \$1,000 on the Chemical Bank of New York. Please to acknowledge its receipt.

Although I could not approve your course in favor of the secessionists, yet I never doubted the sincerity of your belief and the purity of your motives. Thank God! the war is over, and the Union has not been broken. May his infinite mercy preserve it for ages to come! My health is good for a man in his seventy-fifth year.

With my very kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler, I remain always very respectfully

Your friend

James Buchanan

Robert Tyler's reply was no less noble. True he was financially in dire straits. But he was a Virginia gentleman. Not even from his old friend could he accept a gift or a loan. Equally important is the fact that an interrupted friendship was almost to be reformed. Once more Pennsylvania and the Old Dominion clasped hands in fraternal union.

Richmond Va August 13. 1865<sup>40</sup>

His Excellency.

James Buchanan &c

My dear Sir

It was with the greatest pleasure that I recognised your well-known handwriting in the superscription of your letter which I found awaiting me on my return from the Country the day before yesterday. Your handwriting is as clear firm & distinct to the eye as it was nearly twenty years ago when I first became your political friend. I sincerely trust it may continue so for many years to come. I have not changed in my sentiments towards you in the least & entertain the same cordial feelings of personal attachment & the same respect for your political wisdom & . . . . that I was wont so unreservedly to copy while you were in active public life. Had your good counsels prevailed the Country would have escaped the untold horrors of the last four years of bloodshed, crime & war. I would have done more— it would have escaped the imminent perils that now threaten it on all sides from within & without— In truth is there any ground left to hope

that the old Constitutional equilibrium can ever be restored? Shall (we) ever have any Govt hereafter except the will and power of an organized mob in the shape of some predominant party.

Yes I confess without shame that I did believe in the doctrine of the State Sovereignty as the foundation principle of our System of Govt. I did believe in the right & *expediency* of peaceable separation between the States when the issue was made between that principle & the Sword. Am I mistaken in supposing that the power of coercion of States by the Federal Govt. is not only not to be found in the Constitution but was a power which the Constitution expressly refused to delegate? But nevertheless I was not in fact a disunionist & I had no intention of leaving Pennsylvania at the Commencement of the War. I was forcibly expelled & lost all in a day— office, home, friends, prospects for which I had toiled (and that honestly) for years.

But the conflict is now over & I bow my head in humble submission to the will of God. My political race is ended & my destiny is fixed. I shall devote the rest of my life to work & dedicate my remaining energies exclusively to my wife and children. The War has left me literally *nothing*, but an unstained honor that has triumphed over the many temptations of my life & the many weaknesses in my character, and a Resolute will. And daily it requires great patience of mind & a resolute temper to look out on the prospect

before me with an unblenched cheek. But God in this hour helps me to do that.

When you see Col Baker<sup>41</sup> present, if you please, my most affectionate regards to him. I know few men I esteem more. He is a good man-upright, sensible & humane. May God bless him for thinking of me in my distress. Orson (?) Jones too deserves my most grateful sentiments. I should like to shake them both by the hand.

And now my dear Sir altho' I return your check it is with many thanks for your kindness. You have been greatly maligned but in *history* you are already vindicated, fear not.

Should Miss Lane, whose goodness, beauty & amiability I remember with pleasure, be with you pray do me the honor to express to her my respectful compliments. What has become of my friends James Buchanan & Buchanan Henry, your nephews? I hope they are well & doing well.

May you live to enjoy many years of ease & comfort & believe me

With great regard & respect

Your same friend

Ro: Tyler

His Ecly

James Buchanan

From Richmond Tyler went to Montgomery, Alabama, where he spend the remainder of his life. In 1866 Appleton's published Buchanan's defence of

his administration. The appearance of the book in Alabama now in the horrors of reconstruction brought forth the following letters:

Montgomery, Alabama<sup>42</sup>

March 16. 1866

His Excellency

James Buchanan &c

My dear Sir

My friend Col. Hodgeson (who served with distinction in the Confederate Army) is the Editor of the "Mail" the newspaper of the largest circulation published here, & he is in the habit of visiting me at my office. In a conversation about you I called his attention to your Book & he read it as he informed me with great interest & of his own motion wrote the little article I sent you. But at the same time he requested me to write a review of the Book in a graver Spirit & on a more elaborate plan, & this I intend doing after a time.

Your Book will furnish hereafter, the material to which the candid Historian will resort in writing an account of those deplorable events by which the Govt has been revolutionised, & Liberty has become a by-word in the U States. The Genl Govt today stands a thing separate & apart from the Constitution & will remain so untill the end of the present System. I have said always & I here say again that had your Counsels prevaild & commanded the support of the Country to the acts & principles of your administration, or had your patriotic efforts to avert the catastrophe prevaild



amidst the opposing storms of violence & passion the Country would now be united, prosperous & happy, instead of being a Bedlam of folly & insanity.

My family (of whom you are kind enough to enquire) resides in the country about 15 miles away. I have opened a law office in this place & am trying to earn a respectable support. The Legislature has recently passed a Stay-Law however, that I fear will prove disastrous to the profession. You must know that I have become the most *economical* person of your acquaintance—neither drink, smoke, or chew—never enter a Club or Theatre—in truth am a self-supporting machine—sweep my own floor, make my own fires, cook my food, clean my shoes, fetch my water & serve myself in all particulars except to wash my clothing. I sleep on a cot in my office. On Saturday evening I go into the country to see my family & remain with them until Monday morning.

Mrs. Tyler & the children manage to live very economically but without a positive deprivation of the necessities of life on a place near Mr Meigs in this County. Letitia teaches the younger children & a half dozen other little boys & girls. The gentleman Mr. John B Scott, to whom my daughter Grace is married was wealthy before & during the war, but lost more than a hundred thousand dollars during the last few weeks by the cavalry raids & by the sudden emancipation of his slaves.

I have reason to be thankful to God that I did not lose any of my immediate family during the war, &

that my children are without exception obedient, truthful & amiable & worthy of my devoted affection. Their excellent mother has moulded their characters & has done her duty in this as in all other things.

I had heard of Miss Lane's marriage thro the newspapers. I sincerely trust she will find great happiness in life. Pray remember me most kindly to Miss Hetty, & for yourself accept the warmest sentiments of respect & friendship,

& believe me ever most truly &  
respectfully your friend  
Ro: Tyler

His Excellency  
James Buchanan

(1866)

Montgomery Alaba

July 25

With my respectful compliments (*enclosing clippings*)

Ro: Tyler<sup>43</sup>

One of these days I propose to take your Book earnestly in hand & to say something about it. It will make real *History* when these mad days are past.

Montgomery Ala.  
Sep. 24 1866<sup>44</sup>

His Excellency

James Buchanan

My dear Sir

My attention was this morning attracted by the enclosed article.

It is quite significant I think. When the period of political Insanity has passed away, & History is written (as so it *must* be) in a spirit of Philosophy & Truth, the Country & Posterity will discover the awful mischief & sacrifice occasioned by a blind refusal on the part of the people to listen to the advice, warnings, and Constitutional interpretations of the last President of the United States under the *OLD Constitution*.

My family have been afflicted with continued sickness during the summer, & in the gloom by which we are all enveloped here I can see but little light. My situation is anything but agreeable.

I trust my dear Sir that you continue to enjoy good health & Believe me

most truly & respectfully

Your friend

Ro: Tyler

To Ex-Prest. James Buchanan

Buchanan, after seeing his book published, continued to live quietly at Wheatland, ever interested in the political drama and no less interested in the faith of his fathers. He died surrounded by the friendly

members of his household on June 1868 and the good town of Lancaster which respected its most distinguished and kindly citizen witnessed the greatest funeral in its history.

But fate did not always fail to give more rewards and new honors to the younger man. Robert Tyler lived to become the editor of the leading paper in the Southwest, "The Montgomery Mail and Advertiser".<sup>45</sup> He supported President Johnson and did efficient work in saving the state from some of the worst features of Republican misrule. He also regained his political influence such as he had held in Pennsylvania because he was for some years the chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee of Alabama.

Thus ends the story of an earnest and unalloyed friendship of two men such as the political arena not often sees, and whom a public, prejudiced by foes, and confused by sectional misunderstandings, can as yet but partly appreciate.

## NOTES

### TABLE OF PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS

- Moore: "Works of James Buchanan," edited by J. B. Moore, 12 vols., Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1908-1912.
- Buchanan: "Buchanan's Administration on the Eve of the Rebellion," James Buchanan, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1866.
- Curtis: "Life of James Buchanan," George T. Curtis, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1883.
- A. H. A.: American Historical Association Reports.
- A. H. R.: American Historical Review.
- Covode: House Reports, 36th Congress, 1st Session, No. 648. The report on the Covode Investigation.
- Horton: "Life of James Buchanan," R. G. Horton, Derby & Jackson, New York, 1856.
- H. S. P.: Manuscripts of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia.
- L. C. Manuscripts from the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.
- Irelan: "The Republic," Vol. XV, John Robert Irelan, Fairbanks and Palmer, Chicago, 1888.
- Palmer, Chicago, 1888.
- Tyler: "Letters and Times of the Tylers," by Lyon G. Tyler, Whittet & Shepperson, Richmond, 1885.
- T. C.: Manuscripts from the private collection of Lyon G. Tyler, Holdcroft, Virginia.

NOTE: Capitals and Spelling except in extreme cases, follow the style of the manuscripts.

## NOTES

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### CHAPTER I

#### Robert Tyler, Philadelphia 1847-1855

<sup>1</sup> Tyler Vol. II, p. 645. A copy of "Ahasuerus" will be found in the library of the University of Chicago. Also see Ellet, "Court Circles of the Republic", p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> Note: Buchanan's attractive niece, Harriet Lane, who had resided with him from girlhood had made a very favorable impression upon the Court and was later one of the most successful First Ladies of the Land.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, January 25, 1845, H. S. P.

<sup>4</sup> H. S. P.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, December 7, 1847, H. S. P.

<sup>6</sup> At this time the Pope was regarded as a liberal.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, December 10, 1847.

<sup>8</sup> H. S. P.

<sup>9</sup> Moore, Vol. XI, p. 477, Also see Tyler Vol. II, p. 458, 459.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, December 30, 1847, H. S. P.

<sup>11</sup> George M. Dallas was Vice-President under Polk and at this time the chief rival of Buchanan in the Pennsylvania Democracy.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, February 25, 1848, H. S. P.

<sup>13</sup> H. S. P.

<sup>14</sup> McClure, Alexander Kelly, "Our Presidents and How We Make Them", New York, 1900, p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> H. S. P.

<sup>16</sup> Buchanan declined to become a candidate for Governor.

<sup>17</sup> H. S. P., Tyler, Vol. II, p. 460, 461; Moore, Vol. XI, p. 478.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, Sept. 13, 1848, (7) H. S. P. Tyler mentioned that Governor MacDonald of Georgia had been in town and had desired to see Buchanan.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., October 24, 1848, H. S. P.

<sup>20</sup> Curtis, II, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> T. C., Tyler's position here has much in common with the speech of Calhoun in the spring of the same year.

<sup>22</sup> McClure, Alexander Kelly, "Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia," 1905, Vol. I, p. 191-193.

<sup>23</sup> H. S. P.

<sup>24</sup> York County in southern Pennsylvania, a Democratic stronghold.

- 25 H. S. P.
- 26 A sister of Miss Lane.
- 27 The Washington Union, Buchanan corresponded with Donelson who was a nephew of Jackson.
- 28 Armor, William C., "Lives of the Governors of Pennsylvania, 1609-1873, Philadelphia", 1873, p. 415.
- 29 Ibid. p. 419.
- 30 T. C.
- 31 H. S. P.
- 32 T. C.
- 33 Jones was a strong Buchanan man and Congressman from the Reading district, Berks County.
- 34 A. K. McClure, "Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania", Philadelphia, 1905, Vol. I, p. 193.
- 35 H. S. P.
- 35a. Tyler II, p. 496.
- 36 Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, February 4, 1852, H. S. P.
- 37 T. C.
- 38 H. S. P.
- 39 T. C.
- 40 Astor Library, New York City.
- 41 T. C.
- 42 See letter of Buchanan to Robert Tyler, June 8, 1852, Moore, Vol. XI, p. 90; Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 498, 499. See also Buchanan to Cave Johnson, June 24, 1852, Curtis, Vol. II pp. 40, 41. Tyler represented the first Pennsylvania Congressional district at the convention.
- 43 T. C.
- 44 Robert Tyler to Franklin Pierce in which he asks Pierce' permission to contradict authoratively some anti-Catholic advertisements, Philadelphia. Undated letter T. C. See also letter to Mr. Donahue June 24, 1852. T. C.
- 45 T. C.
- 46 T. C.
- 47 T. C.
- 48 e. g. Tyler, II, pp. 498-499.
- 49 Note: Buchanan and King were such close friends that they had been dubbed the "Siamese Twins" by Washington people. This was back in the days when both men lived in Washington.
- 50 H. S. P.
- 51 Pierce later made Wescott postmaster at Philadelphia.
- 52 George M. Dallas, Buchanan's chief Democratic rival in Pennsylvania.

- 53 Robert Tyler in a letter to Judge Jeremiah Sullivan Black, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, of December 29, 1852 withdrew his application for Clerk of the Supreme Court. T. C.
- 54 H. S. P.
- 55 See also Curtis, Vol. II, pp. 76-93.
- 56 New York Public Library.
- 57 T. C.
- 58 T. C.
- 59 T. C.
- 60 The pamphlet referred to was one written by Robert Tyler and had a wide circulation. Note by Dr. Lyon G. Tyler.
- 61 H. S. P.
- 62 For the rapid rise and decline of the Know Nothings in Pennsylvania, see A. K. McClure, "Old Time Notes in Pennsylvania", Vol. I, Chapter XX.
- 63 Black, later to become Buchanan's Attorney-General and Secretary of State, received a plurality of 45,434.
- 64 Henry S. Mott was elected to the important position of Canal Commissioner.
- 65 George Darsie his Whig opponent. McClure, "Old Time Notes", Vol. I, p. 213.
- 66 John Y. Mason of Virginia, United States Minister to France.
- 67 The Crimean War.
- 68 Tyler, II, p. 516.
- 69 For the entire letter see Jones, Charles Henry, "The Life of J. Glancy Jones", Vol. II, pp. 371-373.
- 70 Tyler Vol. II, p. 518. A large meeting celebrating Wise's victory had been held on May 31st in Philadelphia. See J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Wescott, "History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884", Philadelphia, 1884, Vol. I, pp. 718, 719.
- 71 For Wise's account of the "desperate battle" see a part of his letter to George W. Jones of Iowa, June 29th 1885, Wise Barton, H., "The Life of Henry A. Wise of Virginia", New York, 1899, pp. 203, 204.
- 72 T. C.
- 73 Tyler, II, pp. 520-521.
- 74 Curtis II, p. 155.
- 75 Ibid., p. 156.
- 76 Tyler Papers, Vol. IV, L. C. John Appleton of Maine was at this time Buchanan's Secretary of Legation. He was later made Assistant Secretary of State under Buchanan, was at one time editor of the Washington Union, and succeeded Francis Pickens as Minister to Russia.
- 77 T. C.
- 78 Tyler, II, p. 522.

- 79 Curtis, November 23rd, Vol. I, p. 157.  
 80 Curtis II, p. 158.  
 81 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 173, 174. Edited by Professor Charles Henry Ambler.  
 82 Tyler, II, pp. 522, 523.  
 83 Jones, II, pp. 377, 378.  
 84 Tyler, II, pp. 521, 522.

## CHAPTER II For Buck and Breck

- 1 H. S. P.  
 2 L. C.  
 3 T. C.  
 4 T. C.  
 5 Moore, Vol. XI, p. 510, also Tyler, Vol. II, p. 525; H. S. P.  
 6 H. S. P., Probably the correct date is 1856. The letter of May 16 is also in H. S. P.  
 7 L. C.  
 8 Of New Jersey.  
 9 Moore, Vol. XI, p. 510, Tyler, Vol. II, p. 526.  
 10 H. S. P.  
 11 H. S. P.  
 12 Saunders was considered to be an ardent expansionist.  
 13 Forney, it will be remembered, had been Pierce's editor of the Washington Union.  
 14 Senator Broadhead here and earlier, according to the Pennsylvanian, was hoping to obtain Buchanan's mantle of Favorite Son. He was succeeded in the Senate in 1857 by Buchanan's former friend but now powerful opponent, Simon Cameron.  
 15 L. C.  
 16 T. C.  
 17 T. C.  
 18 T. C.  
 19 For the entire speech see, "James Buchanan, His Doctrines and Policy as Exhibited by Himself and Friends", New York, 1856, pp. 10-14. This pamphlet was a Republican campaign document.  
 20 Lewis E. Harvie to R. M. T. Hunter, Richmond, June 16, 1856, A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 197, 198.  
 21 Pennsylvanian.  
 22 H. S. P.

- 23 Ibid.  
 24 A famous English jurist of the days of Elizabeth and James I.  
 25 T. C.  
 26 I regard this statement, in view of the troubles which followed, as one of importance.  
 27 Tyler, Vol. II, p. 530. Ex-president Tyler at this time expected a Democratic victory.  
 28 Ibid., p. 532.  
 29 H. S. P.  
 30 T. C.  
 31 Harris, Alexander, "Biographical History of Lancaster County," p. 106.  
 32 T. C.  
 33 Wise, it will be remembered, had been elected Governor on an anti-Know Nothing platform in 1855.  
 34 T. C.  
 35 T. C.  
 36 The Herald was supporting Fremont to the consternation of the Democrats.  
 37 For the entire letter see Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 531, 532.  
 38 For the letter see Curtis, Vol. II, p. 183.  
 39 These letters of August 19, 20, 1856 will be found in the Pennsylvanian at the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.  
 40 During Buchanan's administration John Tyler Jr. was a contributor to DeBow's Review. At times he used the pen name "Python". In these articles he developed the idea, also held by Robert Tyler, that the workers of the North should look to Southern agrarians for justice because they could not expect it from their employers and manufacturing interests in the North. He also held that the North had become degenerate and unchristian. Hence a separation would have cultural advantages for the South.  
 41 T. C.  
 42 Tyler, II, p. 533.  
 43 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, p. 13, 199.  
 44 McClure, Alexander K., "Our Presidents and How We Make Them", New York, 1900, p. 147. McClure gives too much credit to Forney although he was entitled to a great amount.  
 45 H. S. P.  
 46 Richmond, October 18, 1856, Vol. Tyler, II, p. 533.  
 47 Washington City, October 25, 1856, T. C..  
 48 T. C.  
 49 T. C.

## CHAPTER III

## The First Fruits of Victory

1 John Pettit to Hunter, LaFayette, Indiana, November 10, 1856, A. H. A., Vol. II, p. 200.

2 T. C.

3 e. g. "His letter on the Pacific Railroad in my opinion seems counter to all the cherished opinions and principles of Virginia on internal improvements and opens a wide door to a system of wild expenditure and extravagance that knows no bounds." George W. Munford to Hunter, Richmond, Nov. 22, 1856, A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, p. 202.

4 H. S. P.

5 Robert Tyler, as has been noted above, advocated the Pacific Railroad, and had a resolution endorsing it, passed by a state convention in 1854. This was the first public endorsement of the proposed road and he wrote a widely circulated pamphlet in favor of the enterprise.

6 Jesse Bright, Senator from Indiana and rival of Douglas.

7 W. W. Corcoran was a prominent banker in Washington. He had been friendly to Buchanan for many years.

8 H. S. P.

9 H. S. P.

10 H. S. P.

11 A letter of Lewis E. Harvie to Hunter indicates that both Wise and Hunter were interested in the selection of an editor for the Administration organ at Washington. Roger A. Pryor and Beverly Tucker were considered for the post. Harvie seemed to fear that Wise would desire to have Hunter in the cabinet so that he could have Hunter's place in the Senate. Wise's letters to Buchanan pointed to Floyd, not Hunter, for a cabinet position. A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 202, 203.

12 H. S. P.

13 T. C.

14 T. C.

15 Forney decided to run for United States Senator against the advice of Buchanan. Buchanan wrote a letter to Mott and others of the Pennsylvania legislature urging Forney's selection. The letter was resented by friends of the other Democratic candidates. Certain Southern influences are said to have kept Forney out of the cabinet. Some of them turned, for a reason, to his unfortunate connection with the Forrest Divorce case of 1852. Forney, according to James C. Bennett, editor of the New York Herald, had let the "New York Hotel crowd" who aided in securing Buchanan's campaign funds believe that he could greatly influence Buchanan. He evidently over-played his hand, in giving such an impression.

16 J. Glancy Jones at this time had the promise of Buchanan to be in his cabinet in case any appointment was made from Pennsylvania. Forney also desired the honor and opposed Jones. Later at Buchanan's request, Jones released Buchanan from his promise.

17 Clipping from T. C.

18 T. C.

19 e. g. Wise to Buchanan, Richmond, Dec. 29, 1856. H. S. P.

20 T. C.

21 T. C.

22 Buchanan probably never forgave Cass for his co-operation with Cameron, Buchanan's opponent, in the race for delegates to the presidential convention of 1852.

23 Forney was accustomed to write both Cobb and Wise.

24 H. S. P.

25 L. C.

26 Sears, Louis Martin, "John Slidell", Durham, North Carolina, 1925, pp. 120-122.

27 L. C.

28 T. C.

29 McClure, Alexander K., "Our Presidents and How We Make Them," p. 150.

30 L. C.

31 Wood visited Richmond where on May 9, 1856, at the request of the ladies of the Central Mount Vernon Association, he delivered an address on the life and opinions of Alexander Hamilton. The speech was published in pamphlet form in New York 1856.

32 Wood corresponded with both Wise and Buchanan at this time.

33 Washington Star, March 3, 1857.

34 See Halloway, Laura, "Ladies of the White House," sketch of Harriet Lane.

35 Buchanan to Wise, January 7, 1857. From a catalogue of sale of the collection of William F. Gubly by the American Art Association, 1924. My attention was called to this item by Dr. Thomas J. Montgomery, Late librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

## CHAPTER IV

## Troubles With Kansas

1 H. S. P.

2 H. S. P.

3 T. C.

- 4 The Collector of the Port was Joseph Baker who had known Buchanan for many years. Baker's brother had married a sister of Miss Lane, Buchanan's niece.
- 5 H. S. P.
- 6 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, p. 210, 211.
- 7 Ibid., p. 212.
- 8 Ibid., p. 226.
- 9 Ibid., pp. 218, 219.
- 10 Ibid., p. 219.
- 11 Ibid., p. 219.
- 12 Ibid., p. 219.
- 13 Ibid., p. 227.
- 14 Some wrote that Faulkner was slated to succeed Mason in the Senate. Others held that Floyd was intending to secure that honor.
- 15 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 227-229.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 244, 245. Cralle was the editor of the Works of John C. Calhoun.
- 17 The account of the purchase has been ably summarized in Folwell's History of Minnesota.
- 18 October 16, 1857, published in the Richmond Examiner October 23, 1857.
- 19 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, p. 250.
- 20 Ibid., 253.
- 21 For Buchanan's able defense, see Curtis Vol. II, pp. 199-201.
- 22 Tyler, II, p. 540.
- 23 Hope's letter was dated October 27. Wise wrote and forwarded the letter November 4th, and declared the writer (Hope) to be a reliable man. H. S. P.
- 24 President Buchanan had two nephews who aided him at times, James Buchanan Jr., and James Buchanan Henry.
- 25 H. S. P.
- 26 H. S. P.
- 27 T. C.
- 28 H. S. P.
- 29 The Silliman letter was an able reply of President Buchanan to the anti slavery Professor Silliman of Yale, who wrote Buchanan an open letter on the Kansas question.
- 30 H. S. P.
- 31 Note: Van Dyke (November 29th) expressed his approval that the President would stand by the Convention; hoped Douglas would not be a fool, as it was the only legal body; and felt a great desire that all things should turn right, and believed that Buchanan by his firmness could make them so. H. S. P.

- 32 T. C.
- 33 Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. V, pp. 450-454.
- 34 T. C.
- 35 T. C.
- 36 Tyler, II, p. 541.
- 37 Wise to Buchanan, Richmond, December 16, 1857, warned Buchanan not to trust Banks of Virginia in regard to printing patronage. H. S. P.
- 38 H. S. P.
- 39 H. S. P.
- 40 H. S. P.
- 41 Konkler, Burton Alva, The Life of Chief Justice Ellis Lewis 1798-1871, Philadelphia, 1907, pp. 238-240. Mr. Konkler gives the entire speech as printed in the Daily Pennsylvanian for December 29, 1857.
- 42 The entire letters of each of the cabinet members appeared with Governor Denver's proclamation to the people of Kansas on page 2 of the New York Herald, December 29, 1857.
- 43 Thompson expressed a hope that there would be a full and decisive vote on the slavery question but properly pointed out that there was no way to coerce the voters should they refuse.
- 44 T. C.
- 45 H. S. P.
- 46 Letters of James Van Dyke to Buchanan, Philadelphia, December 19, 21, 29, 30. H. S. P.
- 47 H. S. P. Part of the New York letter will be found in the semi-weekly Tribune, January 12, 1858.
- 48 Tyler, II, pp. 542, 543.
- 49 Ibid., p. 543.
- 50 Yet Wise was both sending and receiving letters from Forney.
- 51 Wise, Barton H., "Life of Henry A. Wise", New York, 1899, pp. 236-239.
- 52 H. S. P. Governor Packer appointed William A. Porter, son of Governor Porter, to a place on the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Porter succeeded John C. Knox who became Attorney General. At the next election Porter, although able and in high expectation of victory, was defeated by a fusion ticket. He thereupon resigned his position although he had but three months to the close of his appointed term. See A. K. McClure's, "Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania", Vol. I, pp. 320, 345.
- 53 H. S. P.
- 54 Moore, Vol. XI, p. 513, also Tyler, Vol. II, p. 544.

- 55 Vaux to Buchanan, Philadelphia, H. S. P.
- 56 A. H. A., 1911, Vol. II, p. 432, also a copy in H. S. P.
- 57 Tyler, II, pp. 543, 544.
- 58 See Cabinet, pp. 53, 54. From H. S. P.
- 59 Ex-President Tyler to Dr. Silas Read, Sherwood Forest, April 7, 1858, Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 541, 542.
- 60 H. S. P. Mayor Vaux was defeated by Alexander Henry, the candidate of the Republicans and Know Nothings. See Scharf and Wescott's, "History of Philadelphia", Vol. I, pp. 727, 728.
- 61 L. C.
- 62 T. C.
- 63 T. C.
- 64 State Journal of the Illinois Historical Society, April-July, 1932.
- 65 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 261, 262.
- 66 Landy's or Lundy's. H. S. P.
- 67 Wise to Buchanan, Richmond, October 4, 1859. H. S. P.
- 68 Ibid., October 12, 1858. H. S. P.
- 69 Savage John, "Living Representative Men", p. 688.
- 70 Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 552, 553. Also see Moore, Vol. XI, p. 514.
- 71 H. S. P.
- 72 L. C.
- 73 Tyler, Vol. II, p. 545. See also letters on the same matters Ex-President Tyler to Robert Tyler. November 23 and December 6, Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 554, 555.
- 74 Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. V, pp. 497-503.
- 75 H. S. P.
- 76 H. S. P. See also letter of V. C. Bradford to Buchanan, Philadelphia March 12, on resolutions for the State Convention at Harrisburgh.
- 77 Robert Tyler to Buchanan, Philadelphia, March 26, 1859. H. S. P.
- 78 J. B. Baker to Buchanan, Philadelphia, March 27, 1859. H. S. P.
- 79 Vincent C. Bradford to Buchanan, Philadelphia, April 7, 1859. H. S. P.
- 80 Tyler, II, p. 550.
- 81 Ibid., p. 550.
- 82 Ibid., p. 552.
- 83 T. C.
- 84 H. S. P.

85 T. C.

86 Wise caused a flurry in the New York papers in the summer and early fall of 1859 by a letter in which he advised sending a double delegation to the coming convention at Charleston. In the letter he praised Mayor Wood and warned the New York politicians that Buchanan was trying to secure the 1860 nomination for himself. Washington politicians asked, "Is this man (Wise) crazy?", but Bennett declared the letter was published to aid the Albany Regency. Dean Richmond pled innocent of getting the letter into print. It was hinted that Daniel S. Dickinson who was one of the presidential possibilities and former United States Senator from New York, had had a hand in the matter. At any rate the incident was good copy for a number of days. e. g. New York Herald August 4, 7, 9, and 11, 1859.

## CHAPTER V

### The Democracy vs. Brown and Lincoln

- 1 Van Dyke to Buchanan, September 12, 1859. H. S. P.
- 2 H. S. P.
- 3 See Covode, p. 343.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 332-334. For letters of March 14, 16, 19, and 24, see pp. 340-344.
- 5 Moore, Vol. XI, p. 514, also Tyler, Vol. II, p. 553.
- 6 H. S. P. On September 13, Robert Tyler complimented Judge Black upon his reply to an article written by Douglas in Harper's Magazine, September 1859, entitled, "Popular Sovereignty in the Territories". This article created a stir at the time and numerous pamphlets were written in regard to it. Robert Tyler asked for 500 copies of Black's pamphlet for distribution. For the Tyler citation see William Norwood Brigance's "Jeremiah Sullivan Black", Philadelphia, 1934, p. 66. Buchanan gave Black suggestions as to the line of attack and Black's pamphlet was regarded as one of the very ablest in the anti-Douglas camp.
- 7 A letter written by a Quaker (David J. Gier of Iowa, a friend of Brown's who did not want to have him injured), who forwarded an unsigned letter to the War Department via Cincinnati, warned the federal authorities to prevent the raid. It does not appear that Floyd received it. C. B. Galbreath, article on John Brown, Ohio Arch. and Hist. Quarterly, July, 1921.
- 8 H. S. P.
- 9 T. C.
- 10 Yet John Tyler Jr. had written two letters to Governor Wise from Washington urging the sparing of Brown's life on the grounds of political expediency. Also see letters in the Dreer Collection in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. One of the letters to Wise featured a warning



hand in red ink. This letter among many others is in the State Library at Richmond.

11 H. S. P. Some official letters are to be found in "Calendar of Virginia State Papers," edited by H. W. Flournoy, Richmond, 1893, Vol. XI esp. pp. 73-100.

12 Rowland, Dunbar, "Works of Jefferson Davis", New York, 1923, Vol. IV, pp. 43-46.

13 From a copy in H. S. P.

14 Harper's Ferry Investigation, Majority Report, 36th congress, 1st Session, p. 17; Senate Reports, No. 278.

15 Bigler to Buchanan, October 22, 1859. H. S. P.

16 W. A. Davis to Buchanan, October 24, 1859. H. S. P.

17 Moore, Vol. IX, pp. 339-41. Also see Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. V, pp. 553, 554.

18 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 281-284.

19 Tyler, II, pp. 553, 554.

20 Iverson in reply said he referred to the Douglas Democracy which had denied the Southern people their rights in the territories. Gobright, L. A., "Recollections of Men and Things at Washington", Philadelphia, 1869, p. 209.

21 L. C.

22 Cameron later foiled Weed and Seward by his own arrangement with Lincoln's managers at Chicago.

23 The New York Hotel group raised much of the Democratic funds sent to Pennsylvania in 1856. The funds were used for speakers and celebrations. Forney in later years said none was spent illegally. There were so many manifestations of popularity shown to Buchanan upon his return from England, and during the campaign that it was perhaps a little difficult for a young admirer like his nephew to accept Ludlow's remarks without further questioning. For popular demonstrations for Buchanan about Lancaster, see Worner, William Frederick, "Papers Read before the Lancaster County Historical Society", Vol. XXXVI, No. 2, pp. 61-83.

24 The following excerpt is taken from an item dated February 24 in the Portsmouth Transcript (Va.), "The editor of the Pennsylvanian has instituted a libel suit against the Sunday Atlas and today, during the hearing of the case, a fracas occurred between Robert Tyler, Esq., representing the former, and James C. Van Dyke, counsel for the latter. The police interfered to prevent a serious collision." For Ex-President Tyler's letter to his son, see Tyler, Vol. II, p. 557.

25 February 21, 1860, A. H. A., 1911, Vol. II, p. 295.

26 March 3, 1860, Ibid., p. 297.

27 Ibid., p. 315.

28 Ambler, Charles Henry, "Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861, Chicago, 1910, p. 327.

29 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, p. 322.

30 Ibid, pp. 299, 300.

31 H. S. P.

32 Forney's intention was published in the New York Times and recopied in the Portsmouth, Va., Transcript.

33 See Curtis, Vol. II, p. 236, for some trouble over naval contracts. Covode prepared a special pamphlet of abusive opinions which was circulated by the Republicans in addition to the larger volume in the campaign of 1860.

34 H. S. P.

35 In this matter Robert Tyler was indeed correct, for Buchanan's papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania contain many letters of support and sympathy from all parts of the Union. The investigation continued well into the summer and the bulky Covode volume took its place by the side of the one on Kansas of 1856. Buchanan did not play politics for money although some of his followers, including Forney himself in earlier years, were by no means unaware of such phases of politics. By the side of the war contracts of the Lincoln regime, the shortcomings of the fifties pale into insignificance and fade into the dusk.

36 McClure, A. K., "Old Times Notes of Pennsylvania", Vol. I, pp. 426, 427.

37 H. S. P.

38 Letters of this study have furnished additional evidence to the above view. See also the letter of Daniel S. Dickinson to Buchanan, Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, April-July, 1932.

39 A. H. A., 1916, Vol. II, pp. 333, 334.

40 Tyler, Vol. II, p. 558. Seymour had been Governor of New York and was leading the Softs. Buchanan would have taken either Dickinson or Seymour, in fact, any Northern or Border State man but Douglas.

41 H. S. P.

42 Peter Cagger, it will be remembered, was a wealthy capitalist from New York state and a member of the Albany Regency.

43 For Buchanan's speech, see Curtis, Vol. II, pp. 290-295.

44 For the entire letter, see Tyler, Ibid., pp. 559, 560.

45 Ibid., pp. 560, 561.

46 Ibid., p. 563.

## CHAPTER VI Secession and Reunion

1 Tyler, II, p. 517.

2 Ibid., p. 578.

3 Cabinet, p. 106.

4 L. C.

- 5 Dollar Weekly Pennsylvanian, January 1861.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Mr. Samuel was a fearless peace Democrat in later years. He was the father of Bunford Samuel, for many years librarian of the Ridgway Library of Philadelphia. Mr. Samuel is an eminent authority of a work entitled, "Constitutional Liberty and Secession", and has furnished some of information on the preparation of this study.
- 8 H. S. P. For the resolution see Shanks, Henry T., "The Secession Movement in Virginia 1847-1861", Richmond, 1 34, p. 145.
- 9 H. S. P.
- 10 State Library, Richmond, Virginia.
- 11 H. S. P.
- 12 General Dix had been called from New York where he was Postmaster, to be Secretary of War but friends persuaded him to take the Treasury Department instead. He was living with Buchanan at the White House at this time. H. S. P.
- 13 Perhaps January 25 or February 9, H. S. P. Probably the date is January 25 because Tyler called upon Buchanan on that day in the morning while Buchanan states that on February 9th Tyler called about three o'clock in the afternoon with Mrs. Tyler. See National Intelligencer, February 2 and Curtis, Vol. II, pp. 466, 468.
- 14 See Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 590-591 for the entire letter.
- 15 January 26, 1861.
- 16 Letcher Papers, State Library, Richmond, Virginia.
- 17 H. S. P.
- 18 For part of Ex-President Tyler's report of his trip to Washington and Doctor Lyon Tyler's comments thereon, see Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 587-590; the entire report is printed with Tyler's letter of the 25th of January and Buchanan's reply in the National Intelligencer, February 4, 1861. On February 7th, the Intelligencer in a long editorial spoke well of Tyler's services in the Convention and favored the calling of a General Convention, if the compromise suggestions of the Peace Convention should fail. The only volume of debates of the Peace Convention was compiled by the ardent Republican, Chittenden.
- 19 H. S. P. Also see Shanks, Henry T., "The Secession Movement in Virginia", Richmond, 1932, p. 146.
- 20 H. S. P.
- 21 H. S. P.
- 22 Unfortunately the only book account of the details of this reception is by the hateful Republican, L. E. Chittenden, an ardent Lincoln Republican who seems to have desired war. See L. E. Chittenden, "Recollections of President Lincoln and His Administration", New York, 1891, pp. 32, 33, 97.

- 23 Hayne's "insulting answer" was dated February 8th. Curtis, Vol. II, p. 460.
- 24 Tyler, Vol. II, pp. 610, 611. For Buchanan's account see Curtis, Vol. II, p. 468.
- 25 Tyler to Buchanan, Tyler, Vol. II, p. 612.
- 26 February 9, 1861. See Tyler, Vol. II, p. 612. Also in Curtis, Vol. II, p. 469.
- 27 According to a letter of Mrs. Tyler to Mrs. Gardiner (February 13, 1861), Buchanan called upon the Tylers on the evening of February 11th. Tyler and Buchanan were frequently meeting each other as is evinced by the fragments of their memoranda.
- 28 February 19 in Tyler, Vol. II, p. 613. This copy is from H. S. P.
- 29 Given in Tyler, Vol. II, p. 614 as February 20. This copy is from H. S. P.
- 30 H. S. P.
- 31 H. S. P.
- 32 H. S. P.
- 33 L. C.
- 34 Judge Crawford, letter from H. S. P.
- 35 Pennsylvanian, March 1861. The Philadelphia Mercury, a paper favoring aggressive action, in reviewing one of Tyler's letters said that it was a hopeless task to make anything but a Virginian of Robert Tyler. A copy of the Mercury may be found in the library of the University of Illinois at Urbana.
- 36 Buchanan had called the Senate in special session before he left office.
- 37 Tyler, II, p. 662.
- 38 Wheatland, near Lancaster, September 18, 1861. H. S. P.
- 39 Tyler, II, p. 685.
- 40 H. S. P. and Tyler Vol. II, p. 686 dated this letter August 14 instead of 13.
- 41 Colonel Baker is probably Buchanan's most loyal friend, Joseph B. Baker, Collector of the Port of Philadelphia during Buchanan's regime. He was an ardent, outspoken and courageous Democrat of the state rights school.
- 42 H. S. P. For Robert Tyler's relations with President Johnson, see Johnson Papers, L. C.
- 43 H. S. P. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania reported that it did not have these clippings. Mr. Ernest Spofford, librarian, to the writer.
- 44 H. S. P.
- 45 Tyler, II, p. 687. Robert Tyler died at Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 3, 1877.

- Abolitionists, 95, 129; Robert Tyler on, 180.  
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- Bright, Jesse, U. S. Senator from Indiana in 1856, 75; and Indiana in convention of 1856, 119, 120; Wise on, 149, 152, 170, 175; rival of Douglas for control of Northwest, 175; and Hunter, 176; re-elected to the Senate, 176; feud with Douglas 192.  
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